BUGLE

Thomas C. Hinkle

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A

Dog of the Rockies

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BY
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To the memory of
QUEEN
—a great stag hound, the
constant companion of my
youth in the hills

Author's Note

THE story of Bugle is based on facts. It was my extreme good fortune to have been born in the west and in the west I have always lived. As far back as I can remember I have hunted with splendid dogs on the western plains and the finest of memories carry me back to good dogs and good horses. I grew up with old plainsmen of the old west and from them I have heard many a tale of great dogs and horses. In this atmosphere it is no wonder that I became a lover of dogs, and when I learned the story of Bugle it delighted me more than words can tell, for Bugle was one of the great dogs who lived and loved and battled, as you shall see in his story.

His father and his fine mother—Queen, of the story—were also actual dogs. I am sure I have not been able to express the full depth of mother love that Queen bore her great son, Bugle.

On one of the days described, Bugle—still a puppy—ran on and on, trying to keep up with the one he loved until he fell exhausted. And when he was picked up in loving arms and carried home on horseback, he learned still more of the devotion and kindness of the one person he loved above all others.

The dog was stolen, as the story tells, and during all those dreary weeks, when a wild savage winter moaned and howled across snowy wastes—days and nights when Bugle was weak and suffering, he did not suffer alone. His friends longed to find Bugle even as Bugle longed and struggled to find them. And while he fought on in his search for home, his friends were steadily searching for him and as each bitter night settled down with no sign of him, there was in one heart in particular a void that never ceased to ache.

In the cattle days of the old west there were many fine dogs who fought—and fought to the death—against grizzlies, battling for the men they loved. This great dog Bugle also battled with a famous grizzly, but Bugle

fought in an exceptional manner. Now and then there was a great dog who possessed something we must call imagination. He fought not only with his fangs but with his brain. Such a dog was Bugle.

The terrible battle with the grizzly, recounted hereafter, was actually witnessed by human eyes. Bugle fought to save the one human being he loved above all others in the world. He battled as his great mother Queen had battled to save him that day when she fought the grizzly on the lonely barren wastes of the Big Pine River—fought to save her baby and died in the battle. So Bugle flew at the same monster with the same savage fury—but Bugle had something his mother did not have—an almost uncanny quickness and cunning, and an amazing plan and method of battle. Many great wolfhounds and bearhounds as strong as he went down to their death battling with this same outlaw grizzly.

Who is there who can read this drama of Bugle's life and say a dog cannot think? But

over and above Bugle's mind was his character, his heart, and his magnificent spirit and loyalty that made him always strive to stay as close as he could to the girl he loved. He asked not one other thing in the world but to be near her.

And after all, from time out of memory, that is all the best dogs in this world have ever wanted. With their patient, intelligent eyes they have looked up at men and all they have asked is love. For this they have suffered and bled and died. The man may be a tramp or a beggar, or he may be so heartless he will not give the dog a scrap of food—nay more, the man may even drive his dog out to starve and freeze in the winter's cold—yet the dog, because of past caresses and past kindnesses, will never forget and he will grieve and moan and howl for some creature who is so low that all his fellow men have deserted him.

I do not know positively what went on in Bugle's fine mind during all his experiences, but it seems to me that I do. Psychologists are still speculating and arguing about the

workings of a dog's mind, but I cut all the knots by saying that actions speak louder than words. I am sure I have known what dogs think by what they do. And the longer I live the more I am sure that to know a good dog well I must love him well. So I pass the story of Bugle on to you with the hope that you may be as fond of him as I am.

T. C. H.

Carbondale, Kansas.

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BUGLE

Chapter I

BUGLE

It all happened many years ago in one of the wild cattle regions near the American Rockies.

Bugle, a two-months-old, brindle-colored pup, came up from the creek that morning to his three brothers. They were lying on a bed of withered leaves and hay in one of the ranch stables. Bugle had been away from his bed about an hour. Now he came up and nosed the other pups, trying to get them to play with him, but they lay very still. Two of them were lying close together, the other lay a little away, just outside the bed of hay and leaves. There had been a tragedy this morning,—all the pups were dead from gnawing a poisoned meat bone that they had come upon by accident. This had happened while Bugle was sitting by himself on the gravelly

margin of the creek which flowed near-by through a pine wood. After Bugle had nosed the pups for a little he moved away with a whimper. His instinct told him that something very bad had happened to them—they could not play any more.

He sat down and looked at them wistfully for a time, then turning his head he saw the meat bone. He went up to it and tasted it. It was good and he ate some of it. When he had finished he lay down and tried to sleep but a sharp pain struck him; a blinding flash shot before his eyes and he could not see. He tried to get to his feet but fell back on the ground. He was only half conscious, and suffering terribly. A burning fever was on him and hot slaver hung from his little puppy jaws. He lay with his sides moving fast as he struggled for breath. Consciousness was slipping away from him,—slipping away.

Suddenly the branches of some near-by pines were thrust aside and a girl of eighteen, Mary Norman, the daughter of Wade Norman the ranch owner, came forward. Her

face was all smiles as she hurried into the stable. She bent down and took hold of one of the puppies. The expression on her face changed, and she quickly reached for the other puppies. Just then there came sounds of boots crunching the gravel outside and Jim Carnarvon, the ranch foreman, came up to the stable door.

"Oh! Jim," Mary cried, and tears welled up in her eyes, "these poor little things are all dead except Bugle and he—I guess he is going too. What in the world killed them!" Jim's eyes opened wide; he came in quickly. One searching look and a startled expression came over his face. He picked up the meat bone. "Well! Well! Mary," he said, shaking his head sadly. "I remember this meat bone. Your father and I filled it with poison and set it away up Yellow Pine Creek for a timber wolf. We had no idea that Queen would come that far when her pups were 'way down here; but she must have found the thing and brought it to her little ones to gnaw on. She's done for too, I reckon,—still, not much of

the meat is gone. Well, I'll bury it deep, Mary; and the poor little pups, too." He looked pityingly at the one Mary held close to her breast. "Poor Bugle," said Jim, "take him to the house, Mary. Maybe we can do something for him," and with a look of deep concern the young cowman turned to his task. All the men had liked these remarkable little wolf hound puppies, but Jim Carnarvon had been especially fond of them.

Holding Bugle close, Mary walked toward the ranch house. This house stood close to the creek where a long, sloping, pebbly bank reached down to the water. Here Mary stopped and bathed the feverish puppy with cool water. While she was doing this a great brindle-colored pure-bred Irish wolf hound, Bugle's mother, ran up and began whining and licking her puppy. She had already missed the others.

"Ah! Queen," said Mary, "it's you, is it? An awful thing has happened, Queen. If you had only known what you were bringing your poor little babies you never would have done

it in the world. Don't cry, now, there's a good dog," she said, laying her hand affectionately on the big mother hound's head. "You did the best you knew. That's all any one can do. I'll take Bugle to the house and do what I can for him."

Mary started to the house with the puppy. The huge mother dog trotted alongside, reaching up with her nose and whining constantly. Mary carried the pup into her own room and let the mother in, also.

For three days and three nights Bugle hung between life and death. On the fourth day he was better; he drank a little water and the next day he was still better. Then came a morning when he stood up and lapped the cool water long and feverishly. From this time he gained rapidly. The cowmen were delighted and babied him whenever they came in. Bugle showed his affection for them all, but it was Mary Norman in particular he wanted to be near. When he first remembered anything at all, after that fearful sickness, he remembered Mary. Her hands had caressed him as he

rested in her lap. He learned well the scent, one he could never forget; she was a good angel to him. He worshiped her, and told her so when he looked up at her with his luminous eyes and wagged his tail slowly. By this act he seemed always to be trying to know exactly what she meant when she talked to him.

From the first, Bugle was an interesting puppy. And even as a puppy he had dignity; he played, but always there was a certain quietness about him. He liked every man on the ranch, and there were many of them. He always had a smile for them; a wag of the tail, and he would come up to them to be petted when they called him. At this time Bugle's experience with men had been entirely happy; he did not know what a bad man was.

So every one enjoyed Bugle, and Bugle enjoyed every one about the place. Wade Norman set out no more poison for wolves, even on the most distant parts of the range. He knew it was only luck that the mother hound had not been destroyed. As to the other Irish

wolf hounds on the ranch, they were constantly with Wade during the day, and at night they were locked in a stall of the stable. He had no fears for them. He had them with him every day for the purpose of hunting a giant cattle-killing bear. Queen also had always been with him until her puppies came. Wade supposed she was staying close in, and had not expected her to take the long ramble that proved fatal to three of her offspring.

For four years the cowmen had hunted the famous grizzly, and for four years he had eluded them while taking a heavy toll of the cattle. But what was worse, he had in these four years, killed two men. One of them, Jim Watson, was a hardy old bear hunter. He had fought with a hunting knife, but his knife and mangled body were found a few days later in a small mountain valley. The other victim was Charlie Durain, a boy of seventeen, whom everybody liked. One afternoon Wade Norman found Charlie's lifeless body near the edge of a pine forest, his rifle broken; and the tracks of the grizzly about the place told the

tragic story. This grizzly was one of the largest, if not the largest, ever known in that section of the West. His track measured nearly fourteen inches. The toe of the right front foot was missing. This was why the cattlemen called him old One Toe. Whether the grizzly lost the toe in a trap or whether it was at some time shot away was never known. The toe was wholly gone and this foot made a striking track when the bear walked in wet sand or damp earth.

Wade Norman had imported four pure-bred Irish wolf hounds from a friend in England who bred them. These were fine specimens, all standing thirty-five inches at the shoulders, except one, Big Boy, who measured fully thirty-six inches. Jube was dun color; Big Boy, the father of Bugle, was a brindle as was Queen, the mother of Bugle. Ben, the other of the four, was dun color.

Wade Norman hoped that some day his great Irish wolf hounds would see the grizzly; and it was with this thought in mind that Wade rode the range far and wide, in

winding canyons, along narrow valleys and far up high mountain trails.

The dogs had a real affection for one another. They leaped up at Wade's horse when he started and wooled one another's necks, delighted to be going on another day of running and adventure. Sometimes for several miles Jim Carnarvon rode with Wade, but it was agreed that Wade should do most of the hunting for the grizzly during the summer while Jim looked after the many cattle. As for Mary Norman, her father cautioned her to ride always in the open. Many times Mary accompanied him for miles in the open ground, but when Wade started up into the rough country, it was always with an injunction something like this: "Now, daughter, I'm going after him. If I see him there'll be trouble enough and I don't want my girl to take any chances."

One evening about dusk Jim Carnarvon came riding in, dust-covered and weary, his horse covered with foam. As Jim swung from his saddle he greeted Wade. "I saw him and

followed him the best I could for miles but it was too rough for the horse. That bear killed three cows last night. I think you can pick up his trail in the morning. He was headed for the west toward the head of the Yellow Pine."

"Good!" said Wade grimly. "I'll take the dogs and start before daylight!"

Chapter II

THE GRIZZLY

It was a region in which the grizzly had all the advantage,—wild rugged mountain passes, deep treacherous canyons, heavily wooded slopes, deep gullies and defiles in the hills, all of which for miles and miles would hide the huge form of the grizzly.

An hour before daylight the next morning, Wade Norman was on the trail. All his great wolf hounds were with him,—Old Queen, Big Boy, Jube and Ben, and as they swept along on an open valley a little after daylight Wade Norman's heart filled with admiration. He was a big and powerful man looking at four great powerful dogs. They loped along with their heads held high; for these dogs depended more on sight than on scent, although they had the latter and used it now and then when they stopped to sniff in a thicket of sage-brush.

The hours went by. It was late afternoon.

As the hounds ran up the valley, Wade galloping behind them, he called his dogs suddenly and pulled up his horse for a look. He took his field glasses and his eyes swept the hills ahead. He moved the glasses slowly along the lower slopes, then a little to the north. A thrill went through him. Had he actually seen aright? He waited until the flash of something passed a clump of stunted pines. Yes! Moving up a high rocky slope he saw the grizzly!

Wade put his horse at full speed over the level land and started up through brush and trees of the rough slope. At the same time he saw the tracks of the bear—two of them very plain on a little patch of bare ground. He called the hounds. They crowded around the tracks, sniffing, growling, the mane on their shoulders standing. "At him, boys!" Wade urged, and the dogs started up the slope. The next fifteen minutes were maddening to Wade because of the many detours he had to make in getting up. He pushed on with all possible

speed and twice his horse fell, but each time the good mount struggled to his feet and leaped forward, and still they were moving up. A steep slope covered with an almost impenetrable mass of rocks and trees loomed suddenly before them. At the same instant Wade heard the dogs above him but could not see them. They were barking wildly and savagely, the deeper voice of Big Boy sounding above all the others. They had the grizzly at bay! Wade knew this at once because these dogs seldom barked. But such barking and snarling now! This and the angry roars of the giant grizzly told that the battle was on.

It was utterly impossible to get the horse up, and it would be hard enough for a man to get up. Wade quickly tied his mount and seizing his rifle started up. He ducked under fallen pine logs, surged through thickets, stumbled over rocks and still plunged on. Breathless, he got his head to the top of the rise. He was ready with his rifle, although he heard not a sound.

Surprised, he stepped cautiously out in the

open. There was brave Big Boy stretched lifeless on the ground. Jube and Ben were cut and bleeding, and old Queen had savage rips on her hip and head. The grizzly was gone. Wade climbed a pine and took his field glass from his belt. He could see no sign of the bear. He climbed down the tree. After piling rocks on the body of Big Boy, he descended the slope, mounted his horse and rode across the valley to the top of a high barren hill, his dogs following. Moving high up among the rocks and stunted trees to the west was the grizzly. He had moved to a place where it was impossible to reach him.

It was almost sundown. Wade rode over to some water holes where the wounded dogs drank feverishly. Then he turned his mount and rode slowly toward the distant ranch house. It was a big loss—the brave father of Bugle.

After Wade had returned and told his story that night at the ranch home, all hands turned to look at the wounded dogs. Their wounds were not dangerous. In a short time they

would heal, but Wade came to a new decision; the dogs would always come at his call. He would not let them at the grizzly again unless he was near enough to see and take a hand.

That night Queen was fed, and slept in Mary's room with Bugle. After Queen had lain down the pup stood looking at her, slowly wagging his tail. This slow wagging of his tail was a peculiar characteristic of his. He seemed to know that all was not well and when he did lie down it was not close beside Queen as usual. Mary had got in bed but she noticed this. Bugle was lying out a distance on the floor, his head up, still looking at Queen who had now gone to sleep with the full moonlight streaming through the window upon her.

Mary got up and stroked the puppy lovingly. "What's the matter, Bugle?" she said. "Your mother will soon be all right. She's asleep. Here now, I'll put you up closer to her and you must go to sleep, too."

He lay where she left him with his nose close to his mother, but he did not close his

bright eyes. His big tail lay straight out behind him. Mary lay awake looking at him; then at last she went to sleep, but Bugle had not closed his eyes. Finally he emitted a little quivering sigh. Earlier he had sniffed the wounds of his mother. He did not understand as yet, but something vague registered itself on his brain, that made him uneasy. He was naturally a sensitive puppy. Something had stirred him up. He lay with his eyes open, but he did not move.

Chapter III

MARY NORMAN

BUGLE was nearly three months old when Mary took him out with her one morning as she rode up the east valley. He was now a big pup and for a considerable time he ran easily alongside the cantering horse. It was a fine cool morning with the wind bending the tall grasses along draws and swales. Mary reached the tall lone pine near the head of Powder Creek, passed the tree, and still rode on toward the east. For a little time she forgot Bugle. When she turned to look for him she saw him lying far in the rear, his head up looking toward her. In an instant she knew. She turned her horse and galloped back. When she came up Bugle was lying full length on the ground, heaving for breath. He was too young for such a long run; he was exhausted. "Oh! how stupid of me!" said Mary, stroking him,

"and you tried to follow Mary—didn't you? I'll get you a drink!" She tied her horse to some sage-brush and hurried down to a small swale. As she stooped to fill her felt hat with the water, the thought came to her that an old dog would have turned aside for a drink, but Bugle, in his puppy loyalty, only struggled on trying to keep up with her. She brought the hat full of water to him and he drank ravenously, the while thumping the ground with his tail in grateful appreciation.

Mary sat down beside him and waited an hour for him to rest. Then she started home and for the most part let the horse walk. It was past noon when she reached the ranch house. Jack Huggins, the cook, came to the door. "Hello, Mary!" he greeted her, then looking at the slow-moving Bugle, he said, "Gosh! he looks kinda peeked. What's happened to him?"

"Jack," she confessed, "I was just plain foolish. I didn't realize he would play out and let him run behind me with never a stop

until I was up the east valley on Powder Creek."

"Gosh sakes, Mary! Did he run that far with never a stop! But that shows he's got mighty good stuff in him—most pups his age would—"

"Please don't brag about it, Jack," she interrupted. "I know he's a fine pup but I hate to think about how foolish I was. I'll never do it again."

"Hello! Mary! You're here!" It was the big booming voice of her father in the doorway. "Let's hurry up and eat dinner," and then coming to the thing in his mind, he said, "I'm going up to the forks of the Yellow Pine to hunt the grizzly. He's been killing cattle up there again. Just got word from Bud Gorman. Bud thinks I ought to get the beast in a week or two because he's hanging around there now steady. You can ride up with me and stay with Mrs. Gorman."

Mary sat looking at Bugle who now lay sound asleep on the floor. "I'd like to go,

father," she said, "but I hate to go and leave Bugle. I'm afraid something might happen to him. He's so young."

"Shucks, Mary," said Jack Huggins. "Nothing will happen to him. I'll take care of him. Leave him to me. Bugle likes me. I'll be glad to take care of him and I'll watch him every minute."

Mary did not speak for a moment but sat still, looking at the sleeping pup. Then feeling assured she said, "Well, I guess I'll go then. But I wouldn't want to stay long."

"Oh, you can ride back any time," said Wade Norman. "I thought it would be nice to have you ride up there with me."

"Of course," said Mary, "I want to go with you."

A little later Mary and her father mounted their horses. The three big hounds, Queen, Jube and Ben were moving about restlessly, eager to follow. "All right!" Wade sang out, "we'll go. I'll be more careful with my dogs this time!"

Bugle came out of the house and up to

Mary's horse. She dismounted and took the pup's head in her hands, caressed him a little, and said to Huggins standing in the doorway, "Jack, you take good care of him; shut him in my room every night."

"Sure! You bet, Mary!" said Jack; and he came out and took hold of Bugle. Mary mounted and rode away with her father. Bugle looked after her and whimpered, but Jack petted him and got him inside the house, then closed the door so Bugle could not see out.

"She'll come back to you before long," Jack said to him. "I got to clean up my dishes now. You lay down and take a good sleep." He patted the pup affectionately.

Jack Huggins set about cleaning his dinner dishes. Bugle lay down with his nose pointed toward the door, his ears half cocked, as if he expected at any moment to hear sounds outside.

Chapter IV

THE LONG NIGHT

It was one afternoon a week later. Jack Huggins, having finished washing his dinner dishes, was taking a nap, as was his custom. It was a warm drowsy day and Jack was sleeping soundly with not a sound to mar his slumber. He had fed Bugle as usual, talked to him and petted him, and left him asleep outside the door.

When Jack lay down to take his afternoon nap he never once thought it possible that anything would happen to the fine pup he had promised Mary Norman he would surely take care of. If Jack had had the least fear it would have been easy to call Bugle inside and close the door; but it was a warm day and having the door open made things more comfortable.

While Jack slept peacefully on there was a

movement in the underbrush down by the creek and the form of a great brindle-colored wolf hound came loping toward the house.

It was old Queen. For some reason, probably to see her only baby, she had left Wade Norman during the night. Wade said afterwards that she had been with him and the other dogs all the day before on their hunt for the grizzly; and she came in with him in the late evening. But the next morning she was gone.

Bugle awakened and looked toward the approaching form, then recognized his mother and went out to meet her. She nosed him and licked him and so in her way kissed him, and then, as if she knew not what else to do, she started away with him up along the creek toward the northwest.

Bugle was delighted. He ran along beside his mother and chewed at her body as he ran. Queen seemed wholly satisfied now that she was with her pup; she hunted along, sniffing here and there among the thickets and rocks for a considerable distance. She was making

steady time and it is quite possible that, now that she had her pup with her, she had in her mind to travel back toward Powder Creek where she had left Jube and Ben. At any rate she was moving in that direction. She stopped now and then to sniff at a bunch of grass or a bush, but only for a second, when she would start on again. Bugle in the meantime stopped at each bush and when his mother sniffed, he sniffed also; when she started on he was close beside her.

They traveled steadily for a long time before they reached a shallow ford in the gravelly bed of the creek. Queen turned into the stream and lapped the water. Bugle also drank his fill. The two then passed into the stream, the great mother trotting easily, for the water covered only her long legs, but Bugle had to plunge to keep up, and he splashed the water wildly as he ran.

On the other side of the creek Queen headed west. She was now in a straight course toward the place where she had left Wade Norman and the hounds. She moved along at a trot

and Bugle easily kept beside her. Finally they reached a turbulent stream known as the Roaring Pine. Queen walked down to the water here and again they both stood at the edge of the water and drank. She then started up this stream, keeping along the margin where there was a long stretch of open gravelly soil. To the right of this open space where Queen trotted along, there was a dense pine woods. As the time passed the two traveled steadily on. Twice more the mother dog led Bugle down to the water and they both drank. At these times, she sat down and rested and as often as she did so she reached down and nosed Bugle and licked him. He sat solemnly beside her and looked out on the turbulent rushing waters of the Roaring Pine. It was a mystery to him.

The sun had swung low in the west when Queen led Bugle along a rocky shore where stood huge bowlders and here and there a stunted pine. This space was some twenty or thirty rods from a heavy, dark forest of spruce. Queen and Bugle had gone perhaps fifty yards

out on this bowlder-studded ground along the margin of the stream. Bugle was following close behind. Queen led him around a huge windfall and was about midway between the woods and the water, when without the slightest warning, there was a rush from some huge granite bowlders, a horrible growl and the old outlaw grizzly rushed for the mother dog.

If Queen had been alone it is probable she would easily have escaped. As it was, she swept aside and the monster, missing her, swung at the pup. He caught him in the hip with the tip of one claw. With a cry of mortal terror Bugle ran, and, as it happened, straight for a drift heap that lay beside two giant rocks. Bugle darted around the débris and crowded in between the rocks, still crying in terror and pain. The grizzly whirled and ran for Bugle. With one sweep of his paw the bear swept the drift into a thousand flying pieces but Bugle crowded close into the space between the rocks. The grizzly had no time to try further. Mother love drove Queen into a wild fury. She heard only the cries of her baby—

his cries of pain. She leaped upon the monster even as he scattered the drift and she slashed savagely at the gray hide. The bear whirled with a deadly roar, but the frantic cries of her young drove all caution from Queen's brain. She rushed straight at the beast as he swung and missed her. She sank her fangs near his shoulder, he reared on his hind feet, lunged against a bowlder and crushed her with his weight. As she fell he struck her with one sweep of his terrible claws and hurled her a lifeless mass down the slope upon the rocks. Instantly he rushed upon her body and clawed and mangled it, then roaring his deadly hate he heaved up the slope, stopped and looked about with his small pig-like eyes. He saw nothing and heard nothing, for Bugle had suddenly become very still. The grizzly stood for a moment, then still uttering deep rumbling growls, he ambled off up the stream and disappeared in the dark gloom of the forest.

Bugle, with blood trickling from his wound, had turned his face outward and seen it all.

He was quivering and breathing fast but instinct warned him to keep still. He lay in between the rocks and waited and waited; and still he lay,—until deep darkness fell and the moon rose over the forest flooding the rocks and scattering stunted trees. Slowly, fearfully, he came forth. He moved out a few feet and stood waiting, listening, looking. Only the sounds of the waters came to his ears. Slowly he moved down the slope where lay the remains of his mother. He gazed on the mangled mass and slowly circled it, whimpering and crying low. Something told him his mother would never be his again. Bitterly he mourned with little groaning whines. Then fear laid hold of him. He was afraid the monster might come back. That scent of the beast was there, a scent that Bugle would never forget. He knew no hiding place except the one he had left. Miserable, he walked up the slope and again crept in between the rocks where he lay while the hours dragged. His wound hurt him but the loss of his mother made pain in his soul. Too heart-sick to

sleep, he only lay in the lonely place, and waited and waited. Now and then he breathed a long trembling breath, but no sound escaped him. He heard the sounds of the wind in the forest as he looked out on the moonlit rocky shore—now so still. Save for the low wind in the forest the only sound that reached his ears was the constant tossing and moaning of the waters below. As the night deepened, small, scattering clouds floated across the face of the moon. The evening star had long since dimmed and a deep dark cloud came up in the west. The wind rose to a roar in the forest and now and then came a cracking sound that startled Bugle violently. Sometimes in the shadows below him he thought he saw a great dark moving thing but he could not see well enough to know. Sometimes he tried to ease his wound by moving and licking the place, but this gave him very little comfort. The dark cloud in the west grew bigger and blacker; a deep, distant rumble jarred the earth. The cloud moved up swiftly and blotted out the moon; lurid flashes shot across

the face of the heavens and the earth trembled almost constantly. The rain came. It fell at first in great scattering drops, ceased; and there was a hush while the sheet lightning flashed and quivered in the skies. Then the heavens opened and the rain came down in torrents. For many minutes it fell in a deluge, then there was a lull in the rain and huge hailstones pelted down on the rocky shore with a deafening roar. Twice Bugle was struck by a hailstone; he cried out with pain and crowded back against the rocks whimpering. The hail beat upon the rocks for many minutes, then ceased, and there came only the steady roar of the wind and rain. Lurid flashes lit up the angry heavens, and now and then came splitting crashes of thunder among the trees. The water ran in streams around the small stones down to the shore, while Bugle felt cold water running under him as he lay in the crevice between the rocks. Too frightened to move he lay in the chilling water, and for two hours shook violently with cold and fear.

The rain ceased and toward dawn stars reappeared. With the coming of morning light, Bugle came out from the rocks and moving slowly down over the stones below, stopped and looked on all sides of him, and then with a true instinct, started toward home. He did not go down near the water again. Probably he remembered his mother was there, but nature had told him that she would never be with him again. And following his natural impulse, he now bent every effort upon reaching home.

He wandered on all that day; when night came he lay down on a rocky bluff side where he remained awake until the dawn. The next morning he ran whimpering and crying into Mary's room. Jack Huggins, hearing him, hurried in. At once he saw the wound in Bugle's hip and he could easily see that the dog was in a very weak condition. It was plain he had traveled far.

"Now look at me!" Huggins said, bitterly condemning himself, for he had been afraid, when he saw the pup was gone, that he might

never see him again. "Just look at me!" he repeated. "Here I told Mary I'd take care of her pup. Looks like a wolf had been after him. I never could forgive myself if I'd lost him. Bugle, I can't see why you'd jump up and go away so quick and so far. Looks like maybe you been miles away. You poor little devil! Something about got you, that's certain."

Jack Huggins set a pan of water before Bugle, then all at once, looked up, startled. There were sounds of hoofs outside, followed by a girl's sharp command to the horse to stop as she pulled him up. The next instant she burst into the house. It was Mary Norman.

She stood for a moment looking at Bugle with her eyes wide, and was so agitated she hardly heard what Jack Huggins was saying as he told her how the pup had run away and had just come back.

She was patting Bugle as Jack talked, but she suddenly stood up and told Huggins she had found where the grizzly had killed the mother dog. "I rode down here," she said,

"thinking I might find Bugle lost on the way. I am sure he got his wound from the grizzly. Now," she added, running out of the door and taking her horse's reins from a hitching post, "don't let Bugle out of the house again for a single instant until I come back! I'm going to ride up the Powder and tell father where he can find the trail of that grizzly!" and she was off like the wind.

Mary rode her horse hard that afternoon. He was covered with lather and sweat when she reached the valley on the upper Powder about sunset.

She found Wade Norman at the ranch house and told him what had happened.

Chapter V

BIG JUBE AND BEN

WADE NORMAN was up the next morning while the stars were still shining. At dawn he was at the scene of the battle on the Roaring Pine. Big Jube and Ben were with him. Wade made a careful examination of the place and he found some things Mary had not seen. The mangled body of Queen was still there. Leading his horse he walked to the heavy woods on the right and it was not long before he found the foot-prints of the bear. Twice he saw them under some heavy pines where the rain had not blotted them out. Wade saw the huge track with one toe missing and stopped to examine them carefully. At last, leading his horse again to the rocky slope, he found the rock where he was certain Bugle had taken refuge. There was a blood stain on one side of the rock where the puppy had pressed against it during the long night.

The two granite rocks were as high as Wade's head. He held his horse by the bridle reins and stood for some time looking down between the rocks, then moved back.

"Bugle must have run in here. The grizzly made for him, and almost got him. Here, Jube! Ben!" Wade called. "Come back and keep close!" The dogs who were down at the stream came running up. Wade mounted his horse and rode into the pine woods. He searched steadily for an hour and managed to pick up the trail here and there until he came out upon a rolling stretch of ground covered with rocks and thickets. Here he lost the trail completely. The rain had blotted out the footprints in the open where there was sand or gravel, and a little farther on it was impossible to see the tracks because of the stony ground. Jube and Ben were up the slope a little distance, sniffing around some stunted cedars. Suddenly they started off at a run, noses to the ground but often throwing up their heads to look.

"Here, Jube! Ben! Come back!" Wade

shouted. "I don't want you to get up to that bear again unless I'm right at your heels!"

Both dogs obeyed instantly. Wade let his horse pick his way up the trail to the place near the cedars. The small stones were so dense there he could make out nothing for certain, but some animal had passed, for the small stones and pebbles had been disturbed. Both Ben and Jube were out ahead again, sniffing along the trail and uttering deep, low growls, the mane on their shoulders standing erect.

"Must be the grizzly," said Wade, watching them.

"Seek him out, boys! But I'm going to keep close to you!"

He followed along the mountain side behind the dogs for more than a mile. He dismounted now and then, always calling the dogs back when he stopped, and each time he examined the rocks and shale carefully. Once he was almost certain he saw the full imprint of the monster bear in the shale but he could not be positive. Of course there were other and smaller grizzlies in these mountains—

grizzlies that minded their own business. Wade was not hunting these.

He saw some open valley land down to his right and about half a mile ahead; it looked promising and his heart beat faster in anticipation of striking a plain trail. "If he crossed there I'll sure see his tracks," Wade said to himself, starting his horse on a gallop.

When he rode down on the little mountain meadow he saw not one sign of a track although he spent several hours in searching. It was now very late afternoon. Night would soon fall. Much disappointed, Wade Norman turned back.

The next day he turned the management of the cattle over to the under foreman, Charlie Henderson.

"You look after things, Charlie," Wade said. "Jim and I are going to hunt that bear until we get him. And you see to it that every one of the boys keeps his eyes ready. I don't reckon any of you will get a chance, but keep on the watch."

"Sure! Wade!" said Charlie. "We'll take

care of things and among us all we ought to get him."

That morning Wade Norman and Jim Carnarvon started out on the hunt. Wade laid the plans. He and Jim would hunt northwest of the Little Powder, but they would travel miles apart so that they would have a double chance of seeing their game. This was the region where the bear moved, a country exceedingly hard to travel in.

The days went by and nothing happened. Then came a thing of mystery. Wade and Jim let up on the hunt for a day to attend to some other business. Nobody took particular pains to watch Ben and Jube. That was the first day in weeks that they had been left at home with nothing to do. It was Mary who had seen them last. She was coming back from the horse corral when she saw both Ben and Jube running and hunting about a quarter of a mile out on the open land to the east, but she thought nothing of it. She had no idea they would travel far. But when noon came and they did not come at all, she was a little

anxious. Still she told herself that they might have gone out in search of her father. He and Jim were that day in a distant part of the range.

To her surprise and the surprise of every one, when her father and Jim Carnarvon rode in that evening they said they had not seen either of the dogs. Wade was troubled, but brushed it away saying, "Oh, they probably took a long running hunt together. They are big and restless. Need lots of exercise. They'll likely show up to-night or to-morrow."

But the next day came and went, with no sign of the two splendid hounds.

Wade mounted his horse on the following morning and rode all day, hunting his dogs. Nothing came of it.

Then something happened. Late one evening, four days after the two dogs had disappeared, an old prospector, Joe Herman, stumbled into the yard near the horse corral in great excitement.

"Hello, Wade—Jim and all of you," said old Herman, heaving for breath as he

dropped down on the ground. The whole Norman outfit, including Mary, gathered around the old man.

"Well," said old Joe, slowly, shaking his head seriously, "I come across the grizzly and he shore 'bout got me. It was down in that sharp cut in the foothills near the Little Powder. I was coming down the slope in this direction and had just got through a bog into some rocks and grass when that grizzly passed out of some trees not ten rods in front of me. I had only my revolver and only three shots in that. I just stopped for a second and stood there—it happened so quick. I was thinking everything under the sun and maybe praying, too, for I sure believed that was the last of old Joe Herman. A million things flashed through my mind, but it didn't do me any good. He didn't any more than see me than he come for me. He was between me and the trees. They could never do me any good. He come straight at me and I fired three shots at him. But he never stopped. I jumped

and dodged around the big rocks behind me and believed my time was coming mighty quick. Then I could hardly believe my eyes. Them two big hounds of yours come down that slope like a shot and went after the grizzly. I thought you must be close by, hunting, and expected to see you any second. The grizzly turned to meet the dogs and I didn't lose any time getting up that hill to the ridge. I didn't see anything of you and ran on until I got to the cover of the tall trees on the top. I stopped then and looked back down the hill. Your two big hounds were making a running fight of it. I could see one of them now and then jump in and slash at the grizzly's heels while the bear was running at the other one. Then I made for this place as hard as I could and here I am.—Well!" Old Herman broke off as Bugle came running up. "Here's that pup I heard about. My, you're a beauty!" he said, caressing the dog with his gnarled old hands. "Nice and kind and intelligent—wish I owned you!"

At this moment Mary Norman exclaimed, "Oh, look, daddy! There come Jube and Ben now!"

The great hounds came loping in and the men crowded around them. The dogs were cut and bleeding in many places. Jube at once began drinking ravenously from a bucket of water that stood near-by. Ben also thrust his nose in and they drank together.

The summer sun was setting while the men gathered about the dogs and talked eagerly about the battle. Wade Norman was more anxious than ever to start for the place and try to follow the grizzly.

When morning came, he and Jim Carnarvon together rode at a gallop to the scene of this last battle ground. All that day they hunted, but again in vain. The grizzly had a way of moving up among the rocks and crags where his trail vanished.

There was little use in trying to trail the bear unless the tracks were fresh and in a region where tracking was easy. Wade and

Jim rode on in silence for a time; Jube and Ben trotted close behind.

Finally Wade said, "Jim, we'll just have to hunt for him with our eyes and our field glasses."

"That's right," replied Jim. "If we get our eyes on him at all I believe it will be at a distance."

Chapter VI

BUGLE SCENTS THE ENEMY

THE summer days passed into early August. The blooms of the orchids hung faded and dying along woodland streams. Long since, the flowers of the blue gilia had been hushed in death, but their green stems still stood in masses on the hillsides.

Bugle was a big dog now; a tall, powerfully built young wolf hound, but he was far from being grown. The wound the grizzly had given him had healed, but it left a streak of white hair on his hip that was plainly visible.

Bugle grew rapidly because Mary Norman fed him all he wanted. Every day he went with her on her long rides on the open range and as the days passed he grew taller and taller. His legs were powerful, like great steel springs, and like springs of steel they acted. As the time went on his brows became

heavy and shaggy, but his soft hazel eyes, looking out from under his shaggy brows, told only of the kindliness and affection of his spirit. He was friendly to every man he met, and every man on the Wade Norman ranch was a friend to Bugle. Bugle seemed to hold every man a gentleman and the treatment he received in turn was of the utmost kindness. But it was plain enough that while he liked them all, he worshiped Mary Norman. When he was a puppy, poisoned and sick, she had taken care of him. When he was grievously wounded by the grizzly and came home weak and ill in body and soul, it was Mary again who took him in and nursed him and loved him. He never forgot. He studied her face, and her every look and word was of importance to him. She came before every one and everything else with him.

When late fall arrived, some of Bugle's unusual power became evident. He was nine months old and nearly grown—such a dog! He stood full thirty-six and one-half inches at the shoulders, a full inch higher than the

powerful Jube and Ben. He was the tallest giant of these giant Irish wolf hounds that there was any record of—so said the English ranchman who measured him and who had imported the other hounds from England for Wade Norman. And, three months later, Bugle measured full thirty-seven and a quarter inches at the shoulder.

There were many of the swift long-eared jack rabbits in the ranch land. Together, Jube and Ben could always catch any jack they went after, and a number of times each dog singly had outrun one of these rabbits and brought him down. But Ben and Jube, like most dogs of their kind, were not quick on the start. They gathered speed as they moved. Bugle was a striking exception. This was shown one morning when Wade Norman, Jim Carnarvon and a number of the men were riding out on a broad plain. A big jack rabbit started up. Jube and Ben saw the rabbit first and got a good lead because Bugle was sniffing at something behind. The men yelled and started the horses at a run. Bugle

threw up his head, and his eyes, which he depended on mainly, saw the jack. He started like a shooting meteor and sped after the rabbit. He passed Jube and Ben within a hundred yards and shot away from them like a puff of smoke. He "tumbled" the jack in the next thirty yards, and caught it less than fifty feet further.

The men yelled and waved their hats in excitement. They dismounted and patted the panting Bugle. He was superb! They made a day of it. Bugle caught four jacks by mid-afternoon,—and he caught them alone because Ben and Jube were too slow in starting.

Wade Norman now called a halt because he said Bugle was too young a dog to be pushed so hard. They rode on to the ranch home, all hands talking about Bugle's speed. Mary came out to see her big pup and Wade told her about his prowess.

"We're all mighty proud of him," said Wade, "but we must not make him go it too hard again. Big as he is, he's only a pup."

Bugle's ability was a thing that also aston-

ished and delighted the cowmen. One evening they put him to a supreme test. Jube and Ben cleared a ten-foot fence, but they could do no more. Then, to Mary's pride and delight, she saw Bugle leap and clear eleven feet over a pole she had placed for the purpose.

"Put it higher!" shouted the men in a chorus.

Mary went up and fixed the pole at twelve feet. She took Bugle back several rods and waved toward the pole, urging him to jump. He looked at the high pole, came close to her and whined. Mary relented; she started back to lower the pole a little.

"Why don't you let him try it, Mary?" said Jim Carnarvon. "I believe he can do it!"

Bugle had not followed Mary back to the pole but stood silently looking at her from the starting point. Mary came back to him, patted him a little and again pointed toward the pole, "Come, Bugle," she encouraged him. "You can do it! Jump, boy!"

Again a low whine escaped him, but this

time it was barely audible. He moved his front feet nervously and stepped a little backwards, then, his eyes flashing and set on the pole, he gathered his mighty muscles, crouched as he started and ran. Swift as the wind he came on and shot into the air; like a bird he soared up and over the pole, with several inches to spare.

The men broke into wild shouting.

"Put it up to twelve feet and six inches, Mary!" they yelled.

"No!" said Mary, standing beside the panting Bugle and gently patting his head. "It bothers him to strain him so. He's wonderful," she exclaimed, kneeling down beside him and still patting him, "but I won't let him jump any more right now."

"Mary's right, boys," said Wade, smiling in admiration. "Bugle is still a young dog. We don't want to overstrain his muscles. We certainly want to take mighty good care of *him.*"

The men began pulling the saddles from their horses and getting ready for supper. For

the time, Bugle was forgotten, but when the press of work was done they at once remembered him. They liked him better each morning when he came up for his greeting. Bugle was certainly a popular member of camp.

When late fall came, Wade Norman did not cease hunting the grizzly, but on the contrary he hunted him with still greater zeal, hoping to get rid of the outlaw before the beast left for the winter. Likewise Jim Carnarvon was hunting for the bear every day in a different section of the country. Wade took both Ben and Jube with him on these last fall hunts but Bugle was made to remain at home. Mary said she could not let him go—at least not yet; and Wade agreed with her that Bugle was too young for this dangerous work. The thing that made Mary afraid for him was that Bugle always seemed to undertake anything that his friends desired him to do. That he would fly at the deadly grizzly if Wade but gave a hint, Mary was positive. Wade also said that if Bugle were along with him, and the grizzly was once

brought to a stand, Bugle would fly at him like a savage beast. A battle with the grizzly was dangerous enough for the two older hounds. "It would be fatal," they said, "to the younger one." So, each morning, although Bugle whined and complained, Wade told him plainly he could not, and rode away with the two older dogs running by his side while Bugle sat and looked after them, mournful and disconsolate. But Mary always took him out with her a little later, and he seemed for the time to forget his desire to go on the long wild hunts with Jube and Ben.

One morning about an hour after Bugle had whined and fretted to go on the hunt with the two older dogs, Mary hurried out to the stables where her horse stood saddled, mounted him and rode away, Bugle running joyously beside her. She rode on for ten miles not far from the Little Powder. There was sharp freezing every night now, and the tang in the air put spirit into her every fiber. She came to a low gully between two hills when she saw Bugle out quite a distance in

front of her, sniffing closely along the sandy trail. She rode up near him but he did not seem to be aware of her presence. The hair was standing on his shoulders as he smelled and Mary was instantly suspicious. She dismounted and led her horse through some tall dead grass near the gully and came out on a stretch of sand. Almost instantly she saw the track that she knew. The giant grizzly had passed along the sandy trail, traveling north. Mary mounted and looked quickly forward. The truth was, she was afraid. She could see nothing toward the north but open ground, although at the end of the west hillside there loomed the trees of a wood that reached back into a canyon on the other side. Bugle, after deciding which way the trail led, started north, running rapidly.

Mary called sharply to him to return. He came back, looked up and whined, and seemed to be in anxiety. Again he started at a run on the trail and again Mary called him back.

She dismounted and petted him saying,

"Bugle, you're too young. Daddy and Jim will have to get him. There's too much danger in this for us. Smell the tracks a little if you must, but I'm going to keep you close."

She mounted her horse, and let Bugle again move on the trail. She wanted to see just how the scent of the tracks affected him, and wondered if he really knew just what that scent was. She watched him as he moved along the trail. She saw not only the hair stand on his shoulders but twice he stopped and threw up his head, uttering a deep rumbling growl. She had never before heard Bugle growl like that. Sometimes when he stopped and looked forward, he emitted a whine but each time there followed the deep growl and he seemed to forget Mary entirely.

They were nearing the woods at the mouth of the canyon on the other side of the hill. Mary decided it was time to go back and called Bugle. He came back at once but he looked up at her, and again whined eagerly, telling her as plainly as he could that he wanted to go on following the dangerous trail.

She started back toward home, and Bugle loped alongside or ranged ahead. She had not gone a quarter of a mile when her father, with Ben and Jube, came riding up along the gully. He was on the grizzly's trail.

He stopped only a moment, took time to greet Mary and Bugle, and then started his horse on again, for already Ben and Jube were running far ahead.

Mary called Bugle and rode on home.

It was ten o'clock that night when Wade Norman rode in on his foam-covered horse. Jube and Ben splashed into the creek, and, after drinking as if they would burst, dropped down at the edge of the water, panting. Jim Carnarvon had ridden in at sunset saying he had not seen a sign of the grizzly. While Wade was pulling the saddle from his sweating mount, Jim and Mary came up. "What's the news to-day?" they asked together.

"Saw him twice," said Wade laconically, "and as usual in a place so rough I couldn't reach him. Saw Bud Hamilton up the Powder. He says that last night the grizzly

killed ten of his cattle by actual count. Bud is hunting him, too. Some of us are bound to get him," said Wade positively, as he threw his saddle up on a peg in the stable.

"Sure," said Jim Carnarvon. "There's a lot of the men over on the east ranges going to hunt him, too. I talked with Ben Hooper to-day away over near the North Canyon. Ben was hunting him and says he's going to keep right at it all winter if the grizzly don't go to sleep—and nobody thinks he does."

"Fine!" said Wade. "Fine! No, that beast doesn't go to sleep—he's too cunning now for that. He's been seen a half dozen times in the winter. Now, Jim, you and I'll show the boys over there we're pushing that bear with all our might on this side. All I'm afraid of now is, that the brute may find it too hot here this winter, with so many of us after him, and leave the country. Then in the spring he'll come back and hide and kill again. But it'll be our business to give him no chance for that. Now that everybody's stirred up, we'll—"

Mary interrupted him with, "And, Daddy, be awfully careful, you and Jim both. After what's happened to others I sometimes get to thinking about you and Jim and I'm worried. I didn't like it to-night, when you were so long getting home."

Wade said earnestly, "Mary, Jim and I are not taking any chances. We've both talked this over. There'll always be plenty of loads in our rifles and we'll aim to get him before he even starts for us."

Chapter VII

THE BATTLE ON THE CLIFF

THIS first fall in Bugle's life passed and December came. The wind moaned and howled through desolate forests. Drifting snow and long bitter nights fell over the earth, and storm after storm drove down from the north to clutch the land with icy hand.

Bugle had no difficulty this first winter. The days held for him nothing but contentment and happiness; his constant smile when near his friends showed this. Jube and Ben slept by the fireplace in the large living room, but Bugle was not satisfied to sleep there. In the early part of the evening he would lie down near Jube and Ben and close his eyes as if he were satisfied to make a night of it there. But as soon as Mary started to her room he opened his eyes, raised his head quickly, then got up and followed her.

Several times, thinking he would be warmer near the fire, Mary and Wade and Jim tried to persuade Bugle to stay with Jube and Ben; but when Mary saw how he looked at her, uttering a low whine that told her how much he wanted to go with her, she gave in and patted his great back and sides. "Very well then, Bugle," she would say, "you shall sleep in my room."

And Bugle always did. He would lie down on a bear-hide rug she spread on the floor for him and keep quite still while she covered him with a blanket. He must have understood he should not get from under the blanket in the night for each morning when Mary awakened he was lying with the blanket over him just as she had tucked him in. He would always look at her seriously while she was fixing the blanket over him but when she had finished and had said, "Now, Bugle, go to sleep," he seemed to understand; he would lay his head down and close his eyes. He at least understood what the whole procedure meant and what Mary wanted him to do, for

it was the same each night and the same each morning.

When a day of sunlight came and the weather was not so cold, Mary either mounted her horse and rode out a few miles or walked some distance on the foothills near the home, and always Bugle went with her.

When one of these fair days came Wade Norman took the other two dogs and rode to the north keeping along the wind-swept portions of the ground where the snow was not deep. He hoped he might get sight of the grizzly; but nothing came of it, although he and Jim Carnarvon both tried their luck at odd times throughout the winter.

With the coming of spring the grizzly was seen again. The first time this happened Wade heard of it late one evening. A lone cowboy came riding down from the north to tell him. The grizzly had made another kill and left his tell-tale track. The cowboy had followed the trail and at last saw him, but it was at a long distance and the bear eluded him in the wild hills and canyons. All knew

about Wade's persistent attempts to run the bear to bay and all had heard about the great wolf hounds. Therefore the cowboy had lost no time in bringing the news to Wade Norman.

From the first of this spring until late summer Wade was out day after day hunting the grizzly. But as usual, a difficulty almost insurmountable was always present. This was the territory over which the outlaw roamed. It was so vast in extent, so rough and wild, that Wade Norman did not see the grizzly until far into the summer. It was late one evening when he had started toward the distant ranch house, and he saw the gray beast high up on the trail of a mountain side; but even as Wade looked the grizzly passed from sight behind some thick-set stunted pines. It was too late to go up the mountain side at that hour, but Wade quickly turned his horse and rode back toward the north, all the time looking searchingly up the high slope. He had his rifle in his hands ready, but he did not see the bear again and as he let the horse

walk slowly forward he was aware that night was coming on.

So the second summer in Bugle's life passed and again the autumn came. This September was unusually mild. The grass on valleys and hillsides was as green and fresh as in the springtime. These days passed into mid-October and still, unusual though it was, the days were warm and mild; but the old cattlemen said it was a warning and that any day or night winter might set in doubly hard and fierce.

The giant grizzly still roamed where he would, taking toll of small bunches of cattle that were to be wintered here and there on the range. He killed two heifers one night about five miles from one of the ranch houses in the east and mocked his hunters by slaying again the next night many miles farther to the west on Wade Norman's ranch. He traveled the valleys by night, and by day he roamed the high mountains among cliffs and crags in places inaccessible.

With the coming of this October, Wade

Norman and Jim Carnarvon laid their plans for the hunt.

That the grizzly had not hibernated for several winters was well known by his winter kills among the cattle. Three years before he was not once in evidence on these ranches, but late in January his tell-tale track was seen by a ranchman many miles to the west of his regular hunting ground. Wade and Jim had hunted him hard during the summer just past, and now they feared the grizzly would again travel away for the winter and come back in the spring to continue his kills among the cattle. Therefore, while it was known he was still in this region, Wade and Jim spent as much time as possible in hunting him. They knew the outlaw ranged most often in the land north and northwest. Here were rugged mountains, green valleys and deep canyons with streams flowing and tumbling through spruce and pine.

Wade and Jim mapped out their territory and one morning they started. Jim was to hunt west of the North Canyon and Wade was

to hunt each day north and east of this canyon.

Wade Norman, as usual, took the two great hounds, Jube and Ben, with him. Each morning as he rode forth Bugle wanted to go also and it became more and more difficult to make him stay behind. Once or twice he became highly exercised and cried and whined plaintively long after Mary had shut him in the ranch house.

There came one morning when Bugle again put forth an unusual cry to go with Wade and the older dogs. Mary was not at the house at the time. Wade had mounted his horse at the stable and was in a hurry. He did not want to take time to ride back to the house from the stable, so he spoke rather sharply to Bugle and scolded him—this for the first time, and told him to go back. Bugle lay down by the stable, his head between his paws and he cried much like a child might cry in bitter disappointment. He saw Wade ride away, Jube and Ben running free alongside the cantering horse. They were running wild and joyful as Bugle wanted to do.

Wade galloped on and on, forgetting Bugle, forgetting all but the object of his hunt. He passed through little valleys dotted with mountain sage and green meadow grass along clear running streams. And still Wade rode on, splashing across little runs in the valleys, cantering around clumps of spruce and pines until he was fully fifteen miles away, and then, on riding around the sharp spur of a hill he was greatly surprised. He saw Bugle,—Bugle coming like a driving wind straight toward him from the east. Plainly he had been following all along, for the most part running under cover, and now feeling he would be safe, he was coming up. Wade dismounted as Bugle came on. The young dog licked Wade's hand and cried and looked up at him from under his great shaggy brows. Wade bent down and petted him and laughed a little.

"Now, Bugle," he said, "you're a great dog. But it's you I'm thinking of—I'm afraid for you. But you're here and it's too far to take you back. I'll let you go now and keep you

close to me!" Bugle was not a barking dog but when he understood that he was forgiven, he barked once and ran like a streak toward big Jube and Ben who were sniffing and hunting. Wade smiled at his enthusiasm and let him go. Bugle almost knocked Jube over, so vigorously did he run into him in his youthful joy. Jube seemed a little surprised but showed his usual affection by nipping playfully at the younger dog's neck, then went on with the more serious business. Ben likewise greeted the vigorous Bugle with playful nips; then Wade called Bugle back. He came instantly and seemed quite content to follow close to the horse while Jube and Ben ranged out a little distance in front.

Wade again rode forward, his keen eyes sweeping the region before him. For some time his course led him over a long rocky, brush-covered ridge. At the end of this he rode down in a long valley on either side of which were high slopes dotted with spruce and fir. These reached up to the timber line and above was barren shale and rocks. Wade

rode northward in this valley for two miles then he suddenly pulled up his horse. On some wet earth near a coulée he saw the tracks of the giant grizzly. All three dogs had missed the tracks and passed on a little to the west. Wade called to them; they came running up. He put his finger down toward the tracks, saying, "Here's his trail, boys! Looks pretty fresh, too!"

Ben and Jube sniffed the tracks and growled; the hair bristled up on their necks and shoulders. Bugle sniffed also, and whined as he sniffed, but each of his whines ended in a growl. He showed more nervousness and anxiety than did the older dogs. Wade supposed that this was because Bugle was young and naturally did not have, as yet, the courage of the older dogs. But he was mistaken in this. He remarked on this many times afterward. Bugle's nervousness here was caused partly by a natural fear, but it was something more; he had a full knowledge of the danger, but he was filled with righteous rage because of what he had already suffered.

At the time, however, Wade Norman thought the young hound's actions were due to fear alone, and therefore he would have no trouble keeping Bugle close to him if the grizzly were sighted and Ben and Jube held him to a stand.

Ben and Jube were running on the trail. After the manner of their breed they did not hold to the scent steadily like a fox hound but sniffed a little, then threw up their heads to look, for, as has been noted, these great wolf hounds depend much on vision. Wade rode close behind them and encouraged them, but he had already made up his mind that he would not let them get out of his sight. Bugle suddenly ran forward and began moving along close to the two older dogs. Wade called him back. Bugle came, wagging his tail. "Keep close, Bugle," said Wade. "Ben and Jube are older. They'll be careful. Stay close by me!"

There was nearly a mile of this plain trail leading down the valley, along the wet sand of the coulée. Time after time the four full foot-prints of the grizzly were visible and

many times the enormous track with the one toe missing showed plainly on the sand. Ben and Jube moved rapidly on the trail when they struck the coulée. Wade followed, riding on the higher ground, keeping his eyes on the dogs and also looking sharply ahead.

About a quarter of a mile distant Wade saw that the open land ended in a wood along the bend of a creek. He called the dogs to him and rode up on a high knoll on the north side of the valley. He was right in his conjecture that the valley ended a short way to the west. There was a small stream there coming down out of a gorge. The pine wood was scattering, but here and there it widened out into a considerable forest. Wade put his field glasses to his eyes, but could see nothing except the silent trees ahead of him. All three dogs stood on the high knoll beside him, looking now up at him and then turning their eyes in the direction Wade was looking; now and then Jube and Ben uttered low anxious sounds. Bugle made no sound but he seemed to look with more alertness than Jube

or Ben. He was not looking in the direction they were. His eyes had caught something farther to the west. His muscles quivered slightly. Wade did not notice him. He was giving his whole attention to looking toward the northwest. Suddenly a strange sound came from Bugle's throat. It was a mixture of whine and snarl, as if the young dog had been suddenly both hurt and frightened. Wade was startled. He looked quickly at Bugle and seeing him with his eyes riveted toward the west Wade looked in that direction. A thrill shot through him. Bugle had discovered the monster outlaw grizzly. He was well up on the mountain side moving below huge granite rocks and small scrub pines; his immense form bulked huge and plain in the sunlight. Wade believed the bear had not seen him, and not waiting for Ben and Jube to see the bear, he called to them softly and rode down into the valley where he had left the trail. When he reached the level below he put his horse at a run toward the wood at the head of the valley. He spurred

on through the woods and came to a narrow creek, three feet deep. Wade's horse plunged through the creek followed by Jube, Ben and Bugle.

The grizzly could not be seen now, but Wade knew about the place where it would be necessary to start up the slope to gain a certain vantage point still north of the grizzly. He urged his horse as fast as possible over some boggy ground and at last came out on a small open space just below some pine trees leading up the slope. At this point there was a rift in the trees and Wade could see well up the declivity toward the west. Suddenly, up the slope he again saw the grizzly, which passed into what appeared from below to be a large area of thick-set pines.

Wade sat on his horse, screened by the trees around him. He dismounted quickly and tied the horse in the deep shade of the trees, where he could not be seen.

All of a sudden Wade had remembered the place. He believed the grizzly had stopped on a little rocky plain above. Wade had

climbed one time previously up to the place while hunting mountain sheep. This level space above was well surrounded by trees. Unfortunately there was a very bad slope here. A forest fire had once swept along the slope and it was covered with fallen pines that lay tumbled over one another like corn stalks blown by the wind. But there was no other way of ascent unless one rode far to the north. Wade decided to go up here, and as fast as he could. He seized his rifle and started up through the wild tangle of green pines, fallen logs, vines and brush. He called in whispers to the dogs to keep back when they started up ahead of him. He wanted to be close when the rush came. Jube and Ben kept slightly ahead, Bugle obeying perfectly, keeping close to Wade, stopping momentarily when Wade stopped, moving on quickly when he moved and uttering a low sound that showed he was more than eager to move ahead when Wade told him to go. His eyes shone with a wild light; his muscles quivered, and his eyes were set constantly up the mountain.

He surely knew what the ascent up that wild slope meant. He had seen the foe. As yet Ben and Jube had not.

Wade struggled feverishly to get to the top quickly. He was at last nearing his goal when Jube and Ben, and then Bugle raced away from him, leaping over fallen trees, rushing under others; all three dogs running close together. They had scented the bear and no power could stop them nor did Wade wish to stop them. He was ready for them to hold the grizzly to a stand. Wade bore off to the left where only the brush would impede him. He struggled up, holding his rifle above his head because the brush reached up to his armpits. He heard the savage snarls of the hounds and also the deadly rumbling roar of the grizzly, and knew the battle was on. Wade had to use all his strength to make fast time through the brush. If he had looked to his left he might have avoided what happened, but he thought of nothing but getting around a mass of the fallen pines so that he could see the edge of the plain above. To

his left, with the brush growing up flush with it and higher than his head, was a steep ravine. Once Wade came within two feet of the treacherous place but his head was turned to the right where the terrible battle was on. He was still going higher. For a fleeting moment Wade saw the grizzly—saw him rushing the dogs,—and saw what made the goose flesh stand—Bugle was leading the attack, and what an attack! He was in, snapping the heels of the bear, then out like a cat. Jube and Ben were also sweeping in and out and slashing and snarling, but Bugle seemed always in, slashing then shooting away like lightning. Wade saw the grizzly swing a mighty arm for him. And in this flash of time Wade Norman saw another thing. He saw what a dangerous place it was for the dogs to battle in. It was bordered on all sides with stumps and protruding rocks and logs. The grizzly was pressing the dogs back and in their sharp turns and plunges the dogs were sure to crash against these stumps and rocks. All this Wade saw in a second. He was strug-

gling to get up to the level when he was dumfounded to feel his left foot swaying down into empty air! He made one wild clutch to save himself but lurched sidewise and rolled and tumbled to the bottom of the ravine. He was not hurt but he was as far from the plain above as when he had started. He heard the continuous roars of the grizzly and the savage snarls of his dogs. "Oh, Lord!" he groaned, "and Bugle's up there too! No use to call 'em. They are all crazy mad now!" He got around to the slope and started up, trembling and breathing hard. A thought came to him. He fired his rifle twice and his big voice boomed:

"Hold him, boys! I'm coming! Hold him!" He thought this might frighten the bear so that he would ease up a little in the fight.

Wade was pitifully slow in getting up this time and so intent on reaching the top, he did not notice that the sounds of the battle had ceased until within ten feet of the plain. Then his heart began to thump wildly. Many

things flashed through his brain as he stumbled on, tearing through bushes and rocks. Suddenly he heard his horse below neighing shrilly. He remembered the horse had neighed once before, but in his excitement of trying to get up the cliff Wade had scarcely noticed the sound the first time. But why were there no sounds of battle above,—not a sound of dogs or grizzly? Had the grizzly become frightened and run away at the sounds of the rifle shots? Had it been a mistake to fire? The horse was still neighing shrilly in the woods below. It angered Wade. Perhaps this neighing of the horse had helped to frighten the grizzly and caused him to run away. Or, was it possible the savage outlaw had done what he had done once before—run for a tied, neighing horse to kill him? He had done this once up the Little Powder. He might now be running toward the neighing horse ready to kill both horse and man. But if the grizzly were running toward the horse, why were there no sounds of the dogs pursuing? There was no sound at all!

All this went through Wade Norman's mind in an instant. It came to him that the battle above had been brief,—but no, he said it had been long—terribly long for he had lost so much time getting up. And then, almost breathless, bruised, trembling, his finger on the trigger of his rifle, he reached the level.

A wave of emotion swept over him. Among the stumps and rocks lay both Jube and Ben mangled and dead. Brave to the last they had given everything they had for Wade Norman. The grizzly was gone. Bugle was nowhere in sight. Where was he! Wade did not want to look, for surely he, too, was lying lifeless near-by. Wade hated the sight of the ground whereon he stood. Crouching under some overhanging pine boughs he pushed slowly out into the open. He knew the cunning of the outlaw. He had before hidden behind rocks and windfalls for his game. But Wade Norman was too wise to be caught in this way. He spent a full hour at the place, moving slowly, carefully, and with each step

watching the woods on all sides of him. But he saw not a sign of the grizzly and what was more strange to him still, he saw no sign of Bugle. At last he found the trail of the bear where he had headed north. But the place was too rough for tracking him.

Slowly, sorrowfully, Wade covered the dead dogs with mounds of rocks, then made his way down to his horse. The animal was trembling and snorting, but there was no sign of the grizzly. Wade patted the horse kindly on the neck saying, "I guess you smelled him and you had a right to be afraid." He mounted and picked his way along the bottom of the foothills. In an hour he came out on a valley to the north.

It was late and Wade was about decided to turn back. He was riding slowly, searching the ground on both sides of his horse. Suddenly he stopped and dismounted. He saw the huge track of the bear leading up the sandy bed of a dry gully. But what interested him far more, he saw other tracks passing over the grizzly's trail showing plainly

that this smaller animal was following. Wade got close and examined these smaller tracks. A peculiar feeling went over him. He said, "That's either a mighty big wolf or it's Bugle!" Again he studied the track. He knew there was little, if any, difference between a gray wolf's track and a big dog's track. But still this foot-print was so big; there was no wolf in the region to make a track so big. Pressed firmly down, leaving a perfect mark, Wade found several of the foot-prints.

"That's a dog's track!" he said, "and it must be Bugle's. Ah!" he exclaimed, "here's blood! blood in one of his tracks,—and here it is again! He's hurt. Why didn't he come back,—if—if this is Bugle. Gosh! how he was fighting when I saw him. Would he be so crazed with anger when he saw Jube and Ben killed that he would follow that grizzly alone? Surely these are the tracks of an awfully big dog and if not Bugle what dog could it be?"

Wade followed the trail a little farther to

the place where it seemed to end in the rocks around a clump of pines. He looked ahead but saw nothing. He put his fingers in his mouth and whistled long shrill whistles, then ceased,—listened for a little, and called loudly the name of Bugle. Again and again he called. The sun had set; shadows of night were gathering. Once more Wade called long and loud, but there was nothing alive to be seen and there was no sound save the low moaning of the wind through the pines.

Wade uttered a half sigh, half groan. "If it's Bugle and he's alive, maybe he'll come in before morning."

Darkness was creeping over the earth. Wade Norman started home.

Chapter VIII

THE LOST DOG

THAT night the wind blew suddenly cold. A big cloud rolled up from the northwest and it began snowing. Mary Norman sat up in her room until midnight waiting for the familiar sound of Bugle's whine at the door. She had wept a little when Wade brought the news. Finally she got into bed, drew a long sigh and said to herself, "If Bugle is alive he'll come home."

Bugle did not come back that night. When morning came there was still no sign of him. A little after daylight Wade Norman and Jim Carnarvon mounted their horses and rode toward the scene of the tragedy. The snow had ceased falling, but the ground was well covered. Wade and Jim, on their best mounts, rode rapidly down the snowy valley until they reached the slope covered with rocks

and fallen pines. They moved on a little north to a place of easier ascent, tied the horses and grasping their rifles, started up the wild slope. They climbed up on the level from the north. For a time both men stood looking and listening. Winter had suddenly come and there was no sound save the sullen roar of the cold north wind through the forest.

"Now, Jim," said Wade, "we'll look very carefully to satisfy Mary and—to satisfy ourselves."

They searched a long time but nothing came of it. There was not a track to be seen about the place. The snow lay undisturbed as it had fallen.

Slowly, speaking scarcely a word, Wade and Jim piled more stones over Jube and Ben, then moved back down the slope to the horses.

As they mounted, Wade said, "Jim, we'll ride up the valley where I saw that trail. I reckon the snow's hid everything by this time but we can follow in that direction."

Halfway up the valley where there was a space swept bare of snow, the men dismounted

and examined the ground carefully. There was one place where Wade thought he recognized the tracks of the grizzly but the outlines were not clear enough to make certain. They mounted and rode on. Snow covered all the ground until they reached a heavy wood far to the north. Wade circled his horse and rode into a long irregular aisle through the forest, Jim riding behind him.

Suddenly Jim called out, "Look here, Wade! Look here!"

Jim was standing on the south side of a windfall. Wade rode back and dismounted. Both men held to their bridle reins and bent down to look. There was a place close up to the windfall bare of snow; in the soft earth two huge foot-prints of the grizzly could be seen, one of them with the missing toe. This and the fourteen-inch tracks could be made only by the outlaw himself. Both men were satisfied as to that, but there was another track —the track of a dog, a very big dog,—they were both positive.

It was strange. After looking for a time,

Wade said, "Looks like the grizzly stopped under the windfall for a while and the dog came later. What do you think, Jim?"

"Certainly looks like it," replied Jim, looking intently down at the foot-prints, "but if it was Bugle, why would he do that? And if he did follow for a while, why didn't he finally come back?"

They stood for a time looking about but could see nothing more because the snow had blotted out all trace of life except at the windfall. The wind stirred through the trees, then was still, and there was only the gloom of the silent woods.

As they mounted again Wade said, "We may be wrong about this being Bugle's track. The grizzly may have killed him, but it looks as if we would have found him back yonder somewhere if that had happened."

The men rode on. The horses' feet thumped steadily for a time in the more open snow-covered woods beyond.

Finally Jim said, "I was thinking the grizzly might have killed Bugle and carried him

off like he carries off a killed heifer. In that case we might never find him."

Wade thought a minute, then said, "Somehow I don't believe the grizzly would carry him away. Of course he might but I don't think he would."

"That's so," said Jim. "Even if he killed him, he wouldn't carry him away."

Both men were thinking the same thing. It was that when the grizzly killed a heifer he frequently had carried the carcass away to some safe place for eating, but in the case of a dog, the bear would only kill, mangle the body, and leave it, as he had done already with the other dogs. And what made them think Bugle was still alive was the fact that they had seen the big dog tracks. There was no other dog in the region that could make a track as big as Bugle, so far as was known, and if there had been another such dog, Wade Norman or some of his men would surely have known of it.

As they rode on, the sky became filled with clouds and fine snow began spitting down.

Wade and Jim rode and hunted for Bugle until evening. They turned for home when Wade pulled up his horse and said, "Jim, I was just thinking that Bugle, after the battle, might have been so worked up and so confused that he didn't know or think just where he was going, except that he wanted to hold to the grizzly's trail. I don't know what happened up there after I fell, but after Jube and Ben were killed, Bugle might have followed the grizzly, actually thinking to kill him, but somehow in the woods he might have lost the bear, and then come out on the trail in the valley where I saw the tracks. Of course that may be all wrong and the grizzly may have killed him, and we may never see him again but, somehow, I feel that he's still alive and maybe he's lying somewhere hurt so bad he can't come!"

"That's so," said Jim, "and I hate to think of it; maybe he'll come in yet."

They started on but had not gone ten rods when Jim pulled up his horse suddenly and exclaimed, "Wade! did you hear that?"

"Hear what, Jim?"

Jim made no answer but sat with his mouth slightly open, straining his ears to hear.

The seconds went by.

"Hear what, Jim?" Wade repeated in wonder.

Still Jim did not speak for a moment; then he said, "By Jove! I could have sworn I heard a dog bark. It was faint—seemed a long way off, but I believe I heard it."

"Which way? How far!" exclaimed Wade.

"It seemed away off there toward the woods along the creek," said Jim, pointing to the north.

They were facing the north. Snow and sleet were spitting in their faces; the horses snorted, champed their bits and tried to turn away.

Without a word both men started forward. They rode in the teeth of the snow and sleet until they seemed to have covered enough distance to be in the vicinity where Jim had heard the dog—if he did hear one.

Wade called loudly and shouted, time after

time sending his great voice far in the gloom of the gathering night, and again he called, and again and again. He whistled also long and loud and then both men fired their rifles at intervals, hoping that if it was Bugle he might hear the sounds and come.

They held their horses to a stand for a minute, turning the animals' heads away from the biting wind and sleet.

"Do you feel sure about it, Jim?" said Wade.

"Yes," Jim said, "I know that was the bark of a dog—seemed like it was a half howl and half bark, like a dog would make if something was hurting him. But it seemed a long way off and I heard it only once. But that was a dog! No matter what comes of it, I know I heard a dog!"

They could do nothing more in the fast-coming night and storm. They started home. It was hard going and the cold got steadily more severe. Time after time both men dismounted to beat their arms about them and stamp their feet. Then they would mount and

gallop over the more open spaces. It was far in the night when they rode in. Mary was still up, sitting beside a log fire, waiting for them.

Wade came in with icicles on his big black mustache, and Jim's young smooth-shaven face was red and almost freezing.

"Well, Mary," Jim said, "you're still up." He drew a long tired breath and said, "I wish we had better news about Bugle, but still it might be worse."

Then, as he and Wade sat down by the fire, they told Mary all that they had seen and what Jim was sure he had heard.

They sat up for hours talking it over. They put their heads together on the matter and tried to figure out what had happened. Of course, they said, just as soon as it was possible, Wade and Jim were going out again to hunt him. And, as they sat talking and thinking of him, the wind moaned around the corners of the ranch house and kept up a steady roar in the forest along the Yellow Pine.

The speculations were many. If the grizzly had not killed Bugle why had not the dog come home? And if the grizzly had killed him would it not have been on the same fatal rocky plain where brave Ben and Jube lost their lives? Yet there was no sign of his body there and Wade Norman had searched so thoroughly he was sure it was not there. As the three talked, Wade said the more he thought of the matter, the more it seemed possible that at the end of the terrible battle on the rocky level, Bugle had been too quick for the grizzly and had eluded his rushes. Then, when the grizzly heard the rifle shots and the persistent neighing of the horse, perhaps he had run, believing a man to be near. At any rate he had run north. Bugle then, wounded, but probably not dangerously, had followed alone on the trail of the bear; followed, perhaps not too rapidly, thinking with all his soul that he should follow and that Wade Norman would soon come up. This seemed very reasonable to both Mary and Jim; Mary sat thinking to herself that if Bugle had done this thing and

had had this faith in her father, what a disappointment to the dog, when he followed that deadly monster mile after mile, and no one came to help. And then, as her father and Jim talked on, Mary did not hear what they said —she was alone with her thoughts about Bugle. Had he been daring enough, and had his wrath been so great that he had again, all alone, attacked the grizzly—perhaps to the north in the wild crags where Jim had said he was positive he heard the bark of a dog? And if so, had the grizzly killed him there? Finally Mary spoke and she told Jim and Wade what was in her mind. They both sat listening.

At last Wade said, "It might be so, Mary. I believe Bugle would have the courage to try to kill the bear alone. Of course he never could, but fine dog that he was—yes, I know he would have tried."

When morning came the snow had ceased falling and it was bitter cold.

Nevertheless Wade and Jim saddled their horses and again rode forth to hunt the dog.

This time they rode straight north to the point where Jim had heard a dog bark.

In due time they reached the place. They searched for miles around yet saw nothing but the snow and desolate forest. Once, Jim rode a considerable distance toward the north, keeping near the east bank of a stream but he could see nothing on either side of the creek save the snow and pine trees. It happened that it was about noon when Jim rode up along the edge of this creek. Wade was riding a little to the east. Jim called to him and they both dismounted. Near the creek was a drift heap of dry sticks. They lighted this and stood close by warming themselves by the fire.

If Jim Carnarvon had ridden fifty yards farther, along the bank of the stream and looked across, he and Wade might have solved the mystery surrounding Bugle, but fate ruled otherwise. A little above the place where they stood, and on the other side of the stream, was a dense wood where the ground under great spreading pines was bare. But neither man had the slightest idea of what had hap-

pened there, and not knowing, they could only hunt blindly.

They stood by the fire some time and warmed themselves thoroughly, then, instead of riding farther to the north, they rode out of the timber toward the east and ascended a high hill. They reached the summit and halted for a moment on a long divide running down toward the southeast. Below them, on the east, was a long stretch of land covered with bushes and little knolls. Travel was not difficult here for a sure-footed horse. They rode down on this lower land and hunted back toward the southeast. Late in the afternoon they came through some brush and straggling cedars for a mile, then entered a belt of timber. In this woods they saw the only living thing they saw throughout the day—a snowshoe rabbit. It vanished in a thicket. Only the frozen snow and the bitter cold wind greeted them as they spurred homeward.

The next day Jim and Wade were once more out on the hunt. Nothing came of it, however, and the days went by, then the weeks

passed, and hope faded. At times the cold and the snow made horseback riding impossible and finally there came a long period of storm and cold that drove all living things to shelter.

Opinion among the men was divided concerning Bugle. Some thought he might be still living although they could offer no explanation as to how it could be. Mary was very strong in her belief that Bugle might still be alive. But others, including Wade and Jim, believed it more likely that the dog had met with some ill fate and that he was lost for good. And as the time moved slowly by, even Mary's hope grew faint, but to this faint hope she still clung. She would not quite give up. And so the savage winter howled down the mountains and canyons; and rushed across desolate wastes, but there was no sign of Bugle—only the howl and moan of the wind and the never-ceasing swirl of the snow on a frozen world.

Chapter IX

LUTE BOGGS

THE worst hour in Bugle's life came when he reached the level just behind Jube and Ben, as they attacked the grizzly. It was a little later that Wade Norman himself saw what an appalling fight the young dog was carrying to the foe. But even with his quick eye, Wade really saw only a little of that tragic battle. Time after time Bugle missed death by a few inches as the huge gray beast swung for him and only the lightning quickness of the young hound saved him from the deadly rushes. Bugle saw Jube, and then Ben, killed—saw it all, and himself wounded in the shoulder, he still fought on. Wild with overwhelming rage and loyalty to the man toiling up the slope, he leaped aside from the rushes of the bear and drove in to strike his enemy in the rear. This was the monster that had caused

all of Bugle's fear—all his trouble; and he fought on, and fought the harder because he thought help was coming from Wade Norman,—surely the man was coming; surely he must be very near. This thing came in Bugle's brain as he fought. And so overwhelmed with the battle was he that he did not hear the shrill neighing of the horse, and, even when the shots were fired and the grizzly started to run, Bugle thought of nothing but pursuing him. The grizzly ran down into the woods toward the north, swiftly passing in among the trees. Bugle, in his haste, ran afoul of a tree, but recovered himself and leaped on. Some matted underbrush was in his way. He ran around this, only to fall and tumble down a sharp incline of a gorge. He fell hard, with a grunt, on the rocky margin of a stream, but struggled to his feet, and following now by instinct, he ran through the woods and brush until he came out on a little valley. The grizzly was nowhere in sight, but when Bugle was halfway across the level land he came on the hot trail. His brain still filled with the

storm of battle, he followed. On he ran, not pausing once to look back for Wade. The grizzly had run; he must be followed and battled with!

Blood was trickling down Bugle's foreleg; he uttered little tense whines and groans as he ran along the trail. He would run with his nose to the ground for a minute, then throw up his head and look eagerly forward. Two miles of this and he lost the trail on a wild rocky slope; but still he ran, blindly, in the direction his instinct led him. The farther he ran the more anxious he was. Three miles more he loped and then stopped at a wooded stream, his great tongue hanging from his mouth as he struggled for breath. He plunged into the edge of the stream and lapped the water almost savagely, stopping to catch his breath and lapping again. Suddenly he ceased drinking and closed his mouth. His eyes shone with a wild greenish light. Again his nose had caught the scent of the grizzly. The wind blew the smell against his moist nose and startled him as if he had been struck a

blow. He took one good sniff while standing in the water and started in the direction of the scent. Straight up along the creek he ran, then turned a little to the west. Yes, the scent was there and it was very strong. Bugle followed the trail a considerable distance up through the woods along the stream, then the tracks led out of the woods to a great upheaval of rocks on a steep slope, and he lost it. Bugle nosed about in some bushes, then worked his way a little up among the rocks. He could not find the scent and again came down and ran along near the creek toward the north, still hunting the trail. He covered several miles when he again stopped to drink. The wind was rising and it was getting cold. Bugle drank his fill, moved back into the edge of the woods and stood for a moment looking and listening. It is more than probable that at this juncture, he would have turned and made his way home, for now the shadows of evening were coming on. But fate decreed otherwise and a strange thing happened to Bugle. He was standing not far from the creek looking,

and somewhat undecided. The wind was rising higher still, and he heard now and then the snapping of a dead limb and once a twig fell near him. If all had been still he might have heard other sounds, but he heard nothing save the roar of the wind, until a man suddenly moved out of the woods quite near.

Bugle at the first sight was frightened and started away but the man held a piece of meat temptingly toward him and called to him softly to come up. Bugle stopped, still shy, but he wagged his tail. He was very hungry and the meat smelled delicious to him. What was more, Bugle had never known any but friends among men. He had no knowledge of this man, called by the cattle men "no 'count Lute." His real name was Lute Boggs. Lute, traveling up the stream for his winter's trapping, had made his camp near this spot, and by chance saw the giant young hound as he came up from the creek. Lute had heard of the great wolf hounds of Wade Norman, far down on the south range and at once guessed this was one of them. At once a thought came to the

dishonest Lute. If this was one of Wade Norman's hounds he was a long way from home. Was the dog alone or was the man who owned him riding in the vicinity? The cunning Lute believed the dog was alone, perhaps out hunting; so he decided to steal him. All this, Lute Boggs thought out, the instant his eyes rested on Bugle. The man forgot the snow and sleet that was now spitting down through the pines, forgot everything except that he wanted to get his hands on this dog.

Bugle had unfortunately stopped to drink, only a few rods from the place where Lute Boggs was making his rude camp for the night. When Lute heard the sounds of Bugle lapping the water he was just in the act of getting his supper. He had cut off a piece of meat and was holding it in his hand. It was that same piece of meat that Lute now held out temptingly while calling softly to Bugle.

Bugle had started away, but now stood, hesitating. He was by nature friendly and trusting. He trusted all men because the men in the only world he had ever known had never

deceived him; they had always been kind to him. He respected men, profoundly. Then, too, Bugle, in spite of his great size, was still a pup. This made him more believing and more trustful. This man was a stranger but he was holding out food and speaking kindly. Bugle was hungry; he needed the food. He smiled, wagged his tail and came timidly forward. Slowly the cunning Lute backed away, and slowly, stopping now and then, but still trusting and following, Bugle moved the few rods to the stranger's camping place. The man kept the meat just out of reach and bent down and picked up something,—bent very slowly, and raised up very slowly. It was a piece of rope. Now Bugle's nose touched the meat in the man's hand but he was timid, and did not seize it. Bugle had always been that way, taking his food from a human hand as daintily as any woman. Mary Norman had always loved him for this. As his nose touched the meat again the man's hand was laid gently on his head and then the meat was released and Bugle was eating it but at the same time he

felt a constriction about his neck. He was frightened, leaped back, felt the thing tighten around his throat. He uttered one loud strangling, terror-stricken cry—a cry that reached far down the valley that night to the ears of Jim Carnarvon. But that was all—it came but once. Bugle was choked into unconsciousness. He came to himself weak and dizzy and opened his bewildered eyes. It was black night. Sleet was falling upon him. He was nearly frozen. He struggled to his feet and started to move away. Something stopped him with a jerk. The rope had been discarded. He was chained to a small tree.

Bugle dropped to the ground, too sick to stand. The biting wind stirred the hair on his body, the sleet drove down through the small tree and fell upon him. He trembled like a leaf. Again he got to his feet and tried to get out of the cold. On one side of the tree the branches reached close to the ground. He moved out as far as his chain would let him and lay down under the pine branches. This broke some of the wind but the tree stood in

an open glade and the wind still struck him. He was so cold he could not rest. He stood up and looked around. Not far from the tree where he was tied he saw a smoldering fire. The fire was protected from the snow and sleet by an old piece of canvas stretched from a huge fallen log to the ground. The man lay under the canvas, close to the log, sleeping in comfort. Now and then the fire blazed up a little, lighting up his face. The sight of the man brought fear and abject misery to Bugle. He stood for a moment looking at the sleeper, then whined and tried to turn away from the cold wind. Back and forth he walked, trying to find shelter, but it was no use. He walked the length of his chain and got as far as he could under one low-hanging pine bough. He was too weak to stand, and yet when he lay down the cold cut like a knife. He grew desperate; when he felt the chain pull him up he jerked back with all the strength left in him. For a full minute he pulled back and struggled to get loose, then dropped on the ground, panting. His eyes were on the sleep-

ing stranger near the dying fire. His struggle had made him aware of a sharp pain that shot through his shoulder where the grizzly had wounded him; it was only a slight wound, but he could not get at it to lick it, and it annoyed him. He had tried this before, but now the smart was worse because he could not move and travel as he wished. The wound stung and smarted constantly. Unable to stand it, he got up and paced back and forth like a wild animal in a cage. Yet he was so weak and sick since the man had hurt him, that in spite of the cold, he now and then dropped to the ground, trembling.

The fire under the old piece of canvas died down very low and only now and then was there a faint glow as the wind fanned the embers. Finally there was only black darkness near the log. The odor of meat and grease came to Bugle's nose, but his fear and anxiety had driven hunger out of him. He again moved under the low overhanging bough and lay down with his head between his fore-paws, looking toward the darkness

where the man lay. At times Bugle closed his eyes for a fleeting moment; a numb feeling came over him. He was half awake, yet half asleep and half dreaming; once he was again back in that awful battle with the grizzly. He seemed to be rushing in again with Ben and Jube; Wade Norman and many men seemed to be running around the battle. Bugle was in pain,—the grizzly had struck him with his ripping claws and was upon him. He started to his feet whimpering, and came out of his dream. His shoulder wound was smarting again. Again he tried to lick it and again paced back and forth at the end of his chain. Once he stopped under the pine bough and tried to see the man near the big pine log, but there was nothing visible there except darkness.

The wind and sleet hissed through the pine needles and drove on with an angry roar through the forest.

Chapter X

DAYS OF TRIAL

THE bitter winter night dragged by. When daylight came Lute Boggs came out of his shelter, built up a small fire and hastily cooked his breakfast. He ate all he wanted and gave Bugle a small feed.

Now, if Jim Carnarvon had ridden a little farther up the creek that day it is probable he would have seen this camp site of Lute Boggs. There was plenty of evidence of the camp for there were several boughs of trees that had been cut and set against the log to spread the canvas over. And the embers of the camp fire remained under these boughs long afterward. The snow only partly covered them under the shelter. If Jim had seen this recent camp that day he would have called Wade's attention to it and it is very probable that they would have started out toward the north and kept on until

they caught up with Lute Boggs and Bugle. Moreover, this seemed more probable still, when Jim Carnarvon did come upon the remains of this camp long afterward. And, putting all things together that he then knew, Jim did connect the camp with Lute Boggs and he also connected Lute with the mysterious disappearance of Bugle; but all this came when it was too late to help the great wolf hound.

Lute Boggs lost no time in getting ready this morning. He used the canvas to make a pack of his small camp equipment and now with this strapped on his back he went over and untied Bugle. Boggs started up through the woods along the creek, holding his rifle in one hand and the end of Bugle's chain in the other.

At first Bugle pulled back, but Boggs scolded him so savagely and so savagely threatened him that Bugle followed. He could not find it in his soul to fight a man.

Bugle was sore athirst for water but Lute Boggs gave him no chance to drink until

nearly noon. Then Boggs stopped by the side of the stream, took the butt of his rifle and broke the thin ice that had formed during the night. This done, he lay down at full length and drank his fill from the hole; he then let Bugle drink for a time but he pulled him away before he had finished.

All that day Bugle followed the man in a steady march into the northwest. When night came his experience was much as it had been the night before. He was tied to a tree while Lute Boggs slept comfortably under his blankets and canvas. There was no use for Bugle to try to get loose. He tried it again and again that night but the chain held him.

Two weeks of this travel went on and day and night it was bitter cold. From early morning until late at night, Lute Boggs traveled in the direction of his trapping ground and one morning about mid-forenoon Bugle found himself in a very heavy forest. Not far beyond was a canyon that wound its way on up from the south to some far distant mountains in the north. There were many

bushes among the trees at this place and the trees, mostly spruce, were of a great height. Snow lay everywhere over the ground except under the giant trees. There was a small log hut here set between two great trees, and on that side facing the canyon the forest was filled with much underbrush. Bugle was promptly tied up to one of the smaller trees about halfway between the canyon and the log hut.

Bugle was very weak and losing flesh steadily because he received not half enough food for his needs. And on this journey he had many times been almost famished for water before the man cut a hole in the ice and let him drink. Ice had to be broken now on every stream for when winter fell that night in October, it had come to stay. One thing here favored Bugle—he was tied to a tree that was surrounded by tall dense underbrush, and this broke the knifing wind. Perhaps his being tied here was an accident. Lute Boggs had hastily chained him here as they were coming up near the hut.

Three terrible weeks went by for Bugle,

weeks when he was not once moved from the tree. During this time Lute Boggs trapped steadily, but with poor success. He was always in an ugly mood; and day after day he was slowly starving the dog. One morning he went out early to run his trap line. He got a mink and was at the last trap when a thing happened that changed Lute's mind about trapping. He suddenly came upon the track of the giant grizzly. It was in a deep dip in the forest where the trees ended on the edge of a valley. The tracks were so fresh that Lute Boggs turned quickly back in the woods and as quickly tore off his snow-shoes. He stood for a minute fingering his rifle and looking in the direction of the trail. He also looked far up on the ridge of hills on the other side of the valley and into the southwest along a steep, rocky mountain-side. But Lute was still afraid the grizzly might have circled and come back into the woods. The man cast furtive and fearful glances even to the rear. He knew the history of old One-Toe, and he had seen that fourteen-inch track with the one toe missing.

Lute Boggs could see the trail of the grizzly as it led down the valley, and he could see it for a considerable distance. He had removed his snow-shoes so that if necessary he could climb a tree. He now put on the snow-shoes and started watchfully along the trail. There was a big reward out for this grizzly,—four thousand dollars,—more than Lute Boggs could hope to make in many winters' trapping. The cunning Lute followed slowly, his eyes like those of a fox. He stopped once and looked down at the enormous track of the grizzly, a track almost appalling in itself. Lute hesitated, then an idea came suddenly to him. He turned about and started rapidly back toward his camp. He hurried along at a rapid pace until he reached the camp, tossed the mink into the hut, shut the door, then quickly moved over to the tree where Bugle was tied. And as Lute Boggs untied Bugle he thought with satisfaction that the dog would come in handy for the hunt. If the grizzly were moving at some distance, the dog could be loosened and set after him so that

he could hold him until the man got within rifle shot. If it was a space dangerously open, then Boggs told himself he would beat a retreat to the nearest woods or tree and leave the dog to his fate. For Boggs had a strong belief that this giant young hound would instantly fly at the grizzly once he got sight of him.

In one way this was good for Bugle, because he was sorely in need of exercise. But the trouble was he was now to get too much of it at one time. If he had not already been half starved both for food and water it is likely he might not have got into so much trouble along the way, but his muscles were weak both from lack of food and lack of exercise. He started eagerly, as Boggs hurried away leading him at the end of the chain, for the cunning Lute would not trust him to follow.

Lute Boggs was excited because of what seemed an opportunity to come into possession of sudden wealth. Leading Bugle with one hand and carrying his rifle in the other, he trotted all the way back to the valley where he

had seen the tracks of the grizzly. It had snowed every day for a week and in places the travel was hard for Bugle. At first he moved along swiftly in joy at even partial freedom, but he soon felt his weakness and it was with considerable effort that he continued to plunge through the snow and follow. However, he put forth all his strength and so managed to keep the man from pulling on the chain.

For an hour, Lute followed the trail along the narrow mountain valley, then he came to a sharp rise in the level land, beyond which loomed a scattering forest of spruce and pine. He stopped and looked for some time, scanning all the open spaces in the woods and the steep mountain side off to the northwest. As Boggs stood considering his plans he took some cold meat from his pocket and began to eat. By chance his eyes fell on the big dog who had dropped down on the snow panting. Lute Boggs noticed his thin condition and it occurred to him that he would feed him a little better so that he could wage a good battle

with the grizzly when the beast was sighted. He tossed bits of the meat to Bugle who snapped them up instantly, stood on his feet and looked up eagerly for more, but he did not get half what he wanted. A little to the right was a small frozen stream. Lute moved across the snow to the run, cleared off a portion of the ice and with a small hatchet which he carried in his belt, cut a hole. He drank and also let Bugle drink. This time the dog drank his fill while Lute, forgetting temporarily about the dog, although still holding the chain, stood searching the open spaces on the north and west. Bugle breathed a long breath and looked out of the corner of his eyes toward the man. It was a look of helplessness, yet one of complete distrust. It was a look of anxiety also, but Lute Boggs had no thought of Bugle. He was looking for the grizzly.

He started on again. On coming near the end of the valley where were many pines, Lute saw a place where the grizzly had evidently stopped and stood on his hind legs. The tracks looked fresh. Boggs was excited. He wanted

to see what the dog would do. "Look here!" he said. "Smell him for me!" And he put his hand on the tracks in the snow.

Bugle understood, and obedient to the command, he moved up close to the man and sniffed at the tracks. He experienced here more fear than hate. The hair stood a little on his shoulders, but it had done that a number of times while he followed behind Lute Boggs on the grizzly's trail. Bugle knew the scent and all that it meant but he knew he had no friend with him. He uttered no sound, at first, as he sniffed at the tracks but there was a look of anxiety in his eyes—anxiety that was made plainer still when he uttered a low trembling cry. Lute did not understand the dog's mind and it was well he did not, or he might have put an end to him then and there; for Bugle was now afraid of the grizzly smell. Lute Boggs had one besetting sin in his heart; it was a fearful, overwhelming temper. When Lute got angry he went wild. But he knew little of dogs and was highly satisfied with Bugle's conduct here as he sniffed the trail.

Lute had not stopped once to see what this giant young hound would do when he first started on the grizzly's trail; and although Bugle had shown little interest, still he had not seemed to be frightened. Lute now stood watching him and was satisfied; he had supposed that the dog might become so frightened he would try to pull away when he really got this fresh grizzly smell.

So now with the dog at his heels, Lute had courage to go on. When the time came, he told himself, he would let the dog take all the risk. He worked his way slowly up a wooded slope and still followed the trail in the snow. It led down on the other side of a ridge to the margin of a gorge. For hours the man and dog followed along this winding gorge, making little detours out among the scattering trees when the trail turned, and again winding back toward the gorge where the bear had turned. Then he saw it was too late to follow farther. He must get back to camp before nightfall.

Lute turned and traveled south, still hold-

ing to Bugle's chain. They were yet half a mile from camp when night fell. Bugle was so weak now he could scarcely keep the pace. This last half mile was the worst of all. They came to a long stretch of open snow, not deep, yet the dog broke through the crust while Lute ran lightly over the top on his snowshoes. Bugle struggled with all his power to keep pace and made it, but when they reached the camp he dropped prone to the snow gasping for breath.

Oddly enough Lute gave Bugle a good supper that night and he even melted snow and gave him water. But this was a matter of business. He did this with the idea that the dog should now be fed at least once each day so that he would have strength to overtake and battle with the grizzly.

So Lute moved about with unusual energy this night. He told himself that he would give up the trapping for the present. He would hunt for the grizzly. When he left the trail he noticed that it had turned off toward the little mountain valley he had seen

earlier in the day. He believed the bear was hunting in the vicinity, and perhaps old One-Toe had passed more than one winter in this region.

Thus Lute Boggs planned and ate his hearty meal of meat cooked over an odorous pine wood fire. With his supper over, he got into his comfortable blankets and was soon snoring, unmindful of the dog chained to the small pine in a thicket. Lute had thought and schemed and, as he thought, planned well, but Lute Boggs had not taken justice into his planning. Oddly enough he had said once, in the presence of Jim Carnarvon and some other men, that he would not allow a dog in the hut with him because a dog stunk and he wouldn't have the dog smell about the place. Whether or not this was the reason, the unfortunate fact remained that while Lute slept in the hut, Bugle was left outside, chained to the tree—chained and shivering in the bitter cold. Fortunately his evening meal helped him. But he was cold,—cold and—so lonely —so utterly heart sick—and lonely.

Chapter XI

THROUGH MIDNIGHT SNOWS

It snowed that night; morning dawned with a cloudy sky and a knifing north wind.

Lute Boggs decided it was too cold for tracking the grizzly. He cooked and ate his breakfast and started out without even looking at Bugle. It was late in the evening when he got back with another mink, his sole catch. This ill luck with the traps put Lute in an ugly mood. He started skinning the mink and cut his finger badly. This threw him suddenly into one of his violent storms of temper. He threw the mink down and cursed savagely. At the same time he heard a sound in the bushes where Bugle was tied. It was Bugle uttering a choking, gasping cry. Lute seized his rifle and ran over to the place.

Bugle had again been struggling to break loose and escape. In doing this he had some-

how lunged around a bush and got the chain so entangled he could not move his head. Lute's rage was increased. He brought up his rifle to kill the dog and take his pelt. But again the possibility of getting the grizzly came to him. He lowered the gun and set it on its butt against the tree. Bugle was choking and struggling, frantic with fear and pain. Lute went up to him, seized the free end of the leather collar and unbuckled it, of necessity choking the dog more in order to release him. Now if Lute had come up to Bugle quietly, and if he had spoken softly to him in his strangling condition, it is certain Bugle would have been calmed somewhat; but when he had already suffered so much at the hands of Lute and when he felt the band actually choking him harder, he was wild with fear. He slashed with his teeth and cut Lute Boggs' hand, just as the strap flew off,—in a flash Bugle was running with all his power. Cursing, Lute leaped for his rifle, jerked it to his shoulder, and fired. The ball tore an ugly wound through the flesh of Bugle's hip just

as he reached the edge of the gorge. He fell and rolled and tumbled down the steep slope. It was only the deep snow on this side that saved him. Down, down, he rolled and tumbled until he fell half dazed on the snow far below. He fell just beyond a great snow-capped jutting rock, and his instinct told him to get in hiding quickly; he struggled to his feet and got back under the overhanging ledge. Here he lay in desperate fear. His wound stung badly, and it was ugly enough, but not dangerous to his life. Night was coming on. This saved him for the time from the man standing far above, peering down into the semi-darkness below.

Bugle did not stir from under the rock until dark night had come and a few dim stars were hanging over the canyon. He then got to his feet and started away. His progress was slow. The snow was deep and covered with a thin crust, but he broke through the crust repeatedly. For a time he left crimson stains in his snowy trail, then the freezing cold came to the aid of his wound and only his foot-

prints in the pure white snow marked his course.

Bugle knew he was free for the time, but something in his brain said to him—not in words, but in a language his Maker had given him to understand, "The terrible man-enemy will follow you very soon. You must go—go—go. No matter how weak you are, no matter how sick, push on and on and on, and try hard to make good time."

He moved down the course of the canyon until he reached a dense forest. Here he found the going easier for a time, for he walked much on the earth under the trees. But he could not stand the strain of constant travel and time after time he stopped and stood panting. He wanted to lie down but he was afraid. At last he grew so weary he had to halt. Three times he got under a tree and lay for minutes, then rose and moved on. His wounded hip was stiff and it hindered him, but he did not think of it until it forced itself on him by causing him to make a misstep, or when the stiffness troubled him unusually.

He made his way out of the forest gloom to a rough open region. He stopped for a time panting, looking, thinking, then started away along an open space leading to his left. The night was brighter now with moon and stars, and Bugle was more apprehensive. He stopped a number of times as he traveled, to look back and listen, but he heard nothing. Even the wind had gone down and there was only the cold silence of the wild around him.

He traveled on and on. Sometimes he floundered in deep drifts but he fought on, over low hills, down little piney hollows and still on, always with a single purpose—to put as much distance as possible between him and the man. And, every tree that Bugle saw, every hill that he climbed, every hollow that he passed, the very silence and the night itself —all of these like some good angel whispered that he must hurry on.

Chapter XII

THE EVIL HEART

LUTE BOGGS was furious that night when the giant young dog slashed his hand and ran away. He gave no thought to the cause of it all. This did not once cross his mind; there was only overwhelming hate in his soul.

It was too late for him to go down in the canyon that night; so Lute went back to the hut in a storm of rage telling himself when morning came he would go down and finish the dog if he still lived.

Night passed, and Lute rose early in the morning with evil in his heart. With his snow-shoes on and his rifle in his hand, he hurried a quarter of a mile up the canyon to a place of descent.

He made his way slowly to the bottom of the gorge, there tightened the thongs on his snow-shoes and hurried like a hungry wolf down the canyon.

He soon found the place where the dog had fallen and it was easy to follow the trail from the jutting rock,—a trail that for some distance left crimson stains every foot of the way; there were also places where the dog had struggled through snow drifts and this only made Lute Boggs stride over the snow faster. He had hurriedly tied up his wounded hand and as he ran on the rude bandage slipped. Cursing savagely he stopped to adjust the bandage, then strode on.

Until noon Lute followed the trail. Almost constantly he cast his eyes forward expecting to bring down his game. But still the trail led on and still there were great holes in the drifts where the dog had sunk through; at times he seemed to be faltering, moving from side to side, and trying for an easier road. Lute believed he must be getting closer.

Three times he came to places that he examined carefully. These were spots in the snow where the dog had lain down and in each place there was the print of blood on the snow.

Thus far the trail had led through the pine woods and later through a rough region with low hills and ridges but now it passed out into a long winding defile in some foothills. The slopes of this defile were irregularly covered with thickets, living and dead pines, cedars, and many rocky ledges and cliffs. The trail lay in the bottom of this cut and led almost straight into the north.

Breathing heavily with his exertions, Lute swung forward at his best pace. Now and then when he looked forward and saw that the trail still led on, he uttered a snarl like a wild animal. He knew the plunges through the drifts must be wearing down his game. He came to a "jump-off" in the cut and leaped down three feet to the level below. Here he passed along a level space in a wide ravine, tramped on through a clump of trees and came out into another dip that was very narrow at the bottom and bordered on both sides with a steep slope. Lute climbed this wind-swept slope, for perhaps fifty feet, to look about him.

In view of what was to happen here on this fateful evening, this place is worthy of description.

The sun had already vanished behind the high mountains on the west and it was evening of this short day. Lute Boggs came down again to the trail and stood looking. The place just beyond him and directly north was covered with a dense pine forest. This forest reached from the topmost ridges of the slopes, a little north, to the bottom of the gorge. But the ground, where Lute Boggs stood, and a little beyond on the left slope, was treeless and covered with a thin snow and scattering bushes. As Lute stood looking he suddenly saw the place where the trail of the dog turned and led up this left slope. Swiftly the man looked up. There were a few scattering thickets and one rocky ledge. Boggs could see the trail turn up the slope and could also see where it ended at a thicket. Yes—ended there! The game must be there, hiding behind that thicket. Again Lute Boggs looked to be sure. He stood very still.

There was no sound in the place. The trees stood silent, sober, as if hushed before the impending calamity.

Lute Boggs was sure. With a wild savage yell he leaped forward along the slope toward the point where the trail turned up, but in his swift, mad rush, his snow-shoe caught on a protruding root; he lurched violently sidewise, his other snow-shoe tripping him, and he was turned half around, falling backward down the slope, his rifle flying as he clutched at the empty air. He fell hard but it was only a few feet down to the level. He was not much hurt and had no sooner fallen than he was on the point of getting up to seize his rifle and complete his purpose, but the hand of fate was already reaching for Lute Boggs.

Chapter XIII

THE WAY OF THE TRANSGRESSOR

BUGLE, after he rose from the rocky ledge in the canyon, struggled on all that night. Morning found him traveling into the north. His wound hurt him at every step and there was a stiffness in that leg that made travel a hard struggle. But he still fought on because he remembered his days with the man; and this wound in the hip made him move on and on and on; he was always in fear that this sinister enemy was following him. Three times he stopped and threw up his head as he thought of home. He sensed the direction but it would have been impossible for him to move straight south any great distance. If he had tried he would have encountered precipitous mountains and deep yawning canyons. In some way he knew this when he turned out of the forest in the night. The truth was he

was moving in a direction that would in time lead out to a passable region on the east. He was traveling and twisting and crossing tortuous trails, nevertheless, something in his nature told him which way to go and it was probable that Bugle, even now, was trying for a detour that would lead him home. But the main thing on his mind was that of getting as far away from his deadly man-enemy as possible. It was late in the evening when he moved down on a little level, between high sloping sides, that ended in a pine forest just to the north. Pine woods also covered the slopes ahead.

Here Bugle stopped for he could go no farther. He held his head low and breathed hard, his eyes closing as he panted. But the fear of the man made him put forth the little strength that was left. He turned up the hill on the thin snow to the west. He could no longer travel in the deep snow below.

Bugle moved up the slope and reached a little, almost level, patch of barren shale at the foot of a steep rocky cliff. He tried to

pass around the cliff but he staggered and the rocks and bushes swam before his eyes. He turned, moved a few feet behind a bush and fell heavily forward against the thicket. He tried to get up, but could not. He raised his head and saw from behind the bush, the man-enemy coming up the valley, coming—coming—coming—but Bugle could no longer arise. He lay with his head down and waited. He was only half conscious but could still remember—he remembered the flash from that long black object and again that awful pain. It was coming again but he was too weak to get up.

It was by the merest accident that Bugle lay in such a way that the bush screened him from the enemy coming up the snow-covered valley.

The minutes went by. The man was coming nearer. Now he was very near. Bugle had not moved, but of a sudden he was brought to his senses. It was the wild yell of the man. Bugle lifted his head, then strug-

gled to his feet and looked. He saw the man running, but at the same time he saw him trip on something; lurch sidewise and fall backward down the incline to the snow below. The man had not yet ceased falling when Bugle started at another sight, started as if by a shot. There was a sound in the pine forest a few rods above, a brief sound as of breaking dry wood and the giant bulk of the grizzly crashed through the edge of a windfall and rushed down on Lute Boggs. Lute saw, and made a start for his rifle. He had not gone three paces when the grizzly was upon him, struck him on the head with one fearful arm and sent him spinning like a stick. Lute Boggs struck the rocks against the hillside with a terrific impact, probably dead before he struck. The grizzly bore down upon him, clawing and mangling him horribly.

At last the savage beast, growling like rumbling thunder, left his victim and moved back toward the pine woods. When he came to the dog's trail leading up he stopped and

looked. He not only smelled the dog—he saw him. With a roar the grizzly charged up the hill.

Bugle was in a dangerous situation. If he had had his strength he could easily have escaped. But it looked now as if fate had, by a strange turn, saved his life from Lute Boggs only to make him a victim of the grizzly.

Bugle was too weak to run. There was only one way,—that was up the steep slope beside the high rocky cliff. On either side of this cliff the earth and shale was covered with thin snow and it was very steep. Bugle started up, made three feet or so, then slipped and fell backward to the hard frozen ground below. Again he started and gained several feet, slipped, but still clung with his toe nails and desperately struggled up. He was climbing onto the top of the ledge as the giant below stood on his hind feet and struck blow after blow at his struggling form.

Time after time the grizzly attempted to come up. His vast bulk crowded close to

the slope as he clawed into it but his claws only slipped and his weight held him back.

He stood on his hind legs to his giant height and stormed along the base of the cliff to get at the dog, but Bugle lay still on the ledge above, his eyes following the monster as he moved below the ledge. The grizzly at last gave it up and ambled away toward the pine woods. For some reason he did not enter them again, and as Bugle lay and watched, he saw the grizzly move up to the hill top on the other side of the valley and disappear.

Night fell, and moon and stars looked down on the valley of death.

Bugle was very cold but he was less fearful. He put his two front feet carefully on the upper edge of the slope and felt of the ground beneath. Slowly, gripping with his toes, he started down the steep and landed on his feet near the base of the cliff.

He stopped here for several minutes and looked down on the dark form lying on the snow and rocks below. He knew it was his once dreaded man-enemy, but somehow he

sensed that this enemy would never harm him again. He still sat and looked a little anxiously through the gloom toward the other hillside where the grizzly had disappeared. There was no sound about the place. Only the dark woods to the north and the snow and the sober winter night.

Bugle started slowly down the slope, limping on one hind foot as he moved, for the hip was now very stiff. Slowly he moved and slowly came down to the plain below. He stopped, pricked up his ears and looked down at the dark object on the snow. There was not the slightest rustle among the pines to the north. The valley was hushed and still as a tomb. In this hush Bugle limped down to the remains of Lute Boggs. He sniffed the dead man for a little, then sat down and cried. Low bitter cries they were that ceased and began again and again. Then he limped away. He was lost, wounded, starved and sick, with no friend to help him. He had never before known a man who was an enemy. He knew the man would never harm him again but

Bugle was heart sick. He knew it was all wrong. He wanted this man for a friend, not an enemy. It was all bitterly wrong—this death—this suffering.

Crying softly to himself he limped up the valley nearly to the pine trees. The easiest going was up the long slope where the grizzly had disappeared. Bugle looked and hesitated, then started up the long snowy hill toward the east.

Chapter XIV

THE BAWL OF A HEIFER

WHEN Bugle reached the hilltop, he turned south on the ridge. Almost at once he came upon the trail of the bear which also led south. Bugle wanted to take no chances so he turned about and struck out straight north along the ridge. There was a long chain of high mountains on his left, and a long winding canyon not far down to his right. Back somewhere in his brain, instinct or reason told him to go well into the north, then travel in a wide detour and so work his way southward again. He passed along the open crest of the divide, and presently entered and crossed through the belt of pines on the ridge. Again he found himself on the top of the open ridge that stretched far away into the north.

If Bugle, when he struck the grizzly's trail

on the hill ridge, had followed on south for a quarter of a mile he would have discovered that it turned down the slope to the east, entered the woods and then led straight north again. But the dog had no desire to follow the trail. He wanted to get away from it with all speed.

The summit where Bugle moved was swept almost bare of snow. He held to this easy trail and traveled all night.

Morning came with gray, low-hanging clouds and stinging cold. Somewhat to the east and west of him he saw high mountains.

Bugle stood at the end of the ridge. Below him lay a valley in the center of which was a frozen stream; and a little west of this, a swale, bordered on either side by tall, dead slough grass. Bugle was very hungry. Most of the night he had traveled with a limp, but now he put all four feet down and started forward to hunt in the slough. He passed down the hill, reached the edge of the tall grass and listened. The stiff wind stirred the

withered blades with a rattling sound, and at times a sharp gust swept the snow into Bugle's eyes.

He moved into the rustling slough, his feet sinking in a foot of snow. When he was halfway through, there was a sudden movement, and a grouse fluttered out and away toward a woods on the west. Bugle watched the bird disappear, then smelled the place where it had been. He hunted through the frozen grass to the farther end of the swale, then turned and came back on the other side, but it was of no use. There was nothing but the rustling, dead grass and the snow. He came out into the open and started up the course of the frozen stream.

When well along in the valley, he came to a place where it forked, with a ridge between. He started up the north fork near its narrow frozen stream, which wound its way between borders of thickly set brush. Bugle wandered for two miles up this stream hunting along the edge of the brush, and now and then penetrating the thickets where it was

possible to pass in. The third time he pushed into the brush a rabbit ran out. Bugle tried to catch it as it ran, but his weakness made him too slow. He looked hungrily as it sped into another mass of tangled thickets to the west.

He then decided to try his luck in the denser woods where the rabbit had vanished.

It was late in the winter day. The clouds grew heavier and a pall of gloom lay over the land. Bugle hunted rapidly through the thickets and at times had to work his way over masses of jagged rocks. It was hard going but the woods might provide him game. While he was yet a quarter of a mile away from the woods, snow began falling and whirling from the low-hanging clouds. He hurried faster and entered the forest.

He had not gone far when he came upon a vine-covered thicket. The thicket, all covered with snow, stood in a small open glade and looked like some giant bee-hive. Bugle started past the thicket on the south side, when his nose scented a deadly enemy; at the

same time the sound of crunching bones came to his ears. He was opposite a small opening in the thicket. Fresh tracks led in on the snow. Bugle was on the point of moving away when there appeared out of the thicket a big timber wolf. He advanced slowly with horrible snarls. Bugle was not in shape for a battle and he knew it. Nevertheless he faced his enemy, uttering deep rumbling snarls and he gave no ground. His hind foot pressed suddenly through the snow on a thorn; the pain caused him to jerk up his leg quickly. This sudden movement, little as it was, started the wolf; he rushed, Bugle met him with such a furious, overwhelming attack, that the lobo leaped clear, turned and backed away snarling; and still he gave ground until he turned and vanished in the woods. Bugle had no heart to follow. The trees and thickets again seemed to be swimming before his eyes. He still stood on his feet and watched the wolf until he disappeared, then dropped down on the snow.

The night was coming down fast. After a

little Bugle got to his feet, and with many an anxious look backward, penetrated deep into the forest toward the west. As he traveled on, the dark fell and the gloom of the forest encompassed him. The wind was rising and roaring through the pines. Once, he was startled violently when a pine cone fell and struck him on the back.

It was intensely cold and promised to be a night of storm. Bugle wanted shelter. He moved on, seeking some place where he might lie down out of the wind and also where he could keep a watch for enemies. His weakness added to his fear and made him very apprehensive in the darkness. He was exceedingly hungry, but fear of enemies made him forego any hunting in this threatening night.

He wandered toward the west in a zig-zag fashion, hunting for shelter purely by instinct. As it happened he was in one of the wildest mountain forests of the old American West,—one where for some time he found almost no thickets at all, but at last he came fairly

against a fringe of underbrush along a stream. He pushed into this and out to a sloping bank of a stream. He heard, not far away, the faint sounds of gurgling water. Being thirsty, he passed down the low slope and along the side of the stream for a little way when he found, not far from the bank, a break in the ice where the waters of a small rapids were racing and churning along. He moved out carefully to the edge and drank his fill. The stream made a sharp bend here, leaving at one point on the north a high, perpendicular bank where the freshet water had cut out a pocket, leaving the roots of small trees hanging low over the bank. Bugle crept into this pocket and found a little bed of coarse dry earth. For a long time he lay and licked his wounded thigh.

About a dozen feet to the right of him there grew a giant, half-dead pine that leaned far out over the stream and for a little distance on either side of this leaning tree the ground was covered with underbrush.

As Bugle lay licking his wound he suddenly threw up his head and listened. Wild, weird howls were borne down on the wind and they were coming through the forest. Bugle listened, with every muscle tense. The howls increased and rose high above the roar of the wind. Nearer they came; then there was a crashing sound in the darkness, and the form of a deer shot past the leaning pine, and leaped far out on the snow-covered ice. Five timber wolves leaped close after it. The deer struck across the stream, plunged into the dark churning water and was whirled away to its death. Two of the wolves could not stop. They plunged into the icy waters and were swallowed up. The other three checked themselves, and with heads hanging, tongues lolling, started back. All of a sudden they stopped with the quickness of cats. They scented Bugle, and immediately started in, only to halt snarling, as they looked into the small cavern, saw two fiery eyes and heard the deadly rumbling snarls. Three times they advanced, struck in, and three times they were

met with such slashing fury they gave way and waited.

Three hours dragged by with the wolves maneuvering about the opening; and three terrible hours Bugle trembled in his weakness and guarded the front with his life.

At last one of the wolves slunk away and the other two soon followed. There was no sign of them after they left the creek side, and the roaring of the storm swallowed up all other sounds. Blinding snow and wind rushed wildly through the night.

Added to the roar of the storm Bugle had been hearing for some time a constant creaking sound. All at once there was a deafening crash and the giant, leaning pine went down before the storm and crashed on the ice. Bugle was on his feet, frightened and trembling. The ground where he lay had been shaken. He stood up for a time, then, because he was nearly frozen he lay down and curled up in an effort to get warm, but he kept his head toward the opening, and did not close his eyes.

Finally great weariness came over him and he closed his eyes. He seemed to be in another land for he was in that dangerous, exhausted state when a dog or man wanders in mind and memory.

Sometimes pine cones were whirled down from the trees and struck on the snow and ice before him, but he was not conscious of their falling. The wind whirled the snow from the ice and sent fine swirls into the pocket and over his face, but he only lay and quivered—and hung between life and death. The wind arose higher and drove furiously through the trees, snapping and popping huge boughs, but still Bugle did not move. He breathed in short jerky breaths and was far away in a dream. He cried and trembled, for he was again struggling to get away from Lute Boggs. The man was beating him savagely and Bugle was leaping wildly to get free. Then he seemed suddenly to escape and at once he was in another atmosphere—he was running and playing with big Jube and Ben. Down, down the valley they ran and played. A long-eared

jack rabbit started up. Bugle was running and straining every muscle and his muscles quivered and jerked as his sub-conscious mind carried him on. Then in a flash he saw not the long-eared jack rabbit but the grizzly, and again he fought and snarled in his dream; he was rushing in and out and slashing, and the grizzly was bearing down upon him; huge, swift, horrible.

Again he saw the grizzly rush upon Jube, and he heard his death cries; and again the monster charged Ben and killed him; once more Bugle was driving in and trying to hold the monster until the man came. But in his dream he seemed to grow weaker and weaker. The grizzly was coming and Bugle could not move. And then he was transported in his dream to a far away land where there was a little green valley and a clear stream. He was standing there looking up at *her!* Yes, it was the girl, Mary Norman. She had her hands on him and he experienced that feeling that only he could know. The world was all good. There was no trouble. There was

no sorrow now and there was no night. It was sunlight, and the girl and he stood together while he looked up into her face. He did not understand all the sweet mystery, only this—he was with *her* and there was nothing wrong. All was well.

A loud crash came as a tree was hurled down in the timber. Bugle awakened with a start and listened to the roar of the wind.

For a long time he lay thinking of home. He thought of nothing in particular, only that he wanted to be there and away from all this.

When daylight came the wind went down. Bugle came out. There was snow everywhere. The dark waters of the rapids were still churning out in the stream, but the holes were smaller, because the cold had frozen more ice. There was still a trail where the deer and the two wolves had rushed out to their death. The tracks were nearly filled with snow, but they were visible.

Bugle worked his way out a little on the trail and sniffed it, lifted his head and looked searchingly back into the forest. He heard

no sound save the sullen roar of the wind through the trees. He was very hungry and very thirsty.

He started forward again, cautiously testing the ice with his front feet. Slowly and more slowly still, he moved as he got farther out. The ice held, and near the edge he lay down and stretched his head over to the cold water and lapped the refreshing stream for a long time. He arose, stepped backward a few steps, then turned and made his way up into the forest. He had passed through the woods nearly a mile when, as he was threading his way through some underbrush, he heard a wild cry and a low snarl within ten feet of him. He plunged into the brush to find a weasel killing a cottontail rabbit. The weasel slid away in the underbrush while Bugle seized the rabbit and devoured it.

Eagerly now, with this little feed in him, he moved away, his great head held high, his eyes looking sharply for more game. He hunted on for hours in the short winter day but he got no more game. At last he passed

out of the woods to a wide, level, rocky barren where there were many little heaps of drifted snow. Circling around the small drifts, he crossed the barren and started down a slope beyond, when he saw a movement behind a mass of brush below him. He stopped instantly, and uttering a sound of mingled fear and anger, he whirled to the right and ran back to some scattering thickets. He stopped behind one of these and looked cautiously down the slope. He saw the giant grizzly moving about among some rocks and stumps. When Bugle first saw the bear he was standing still, but now he moved on. At times the long gray back of the grizzly was visible as he walked through the low thickets and at times Bugle saw only the violent movements of the taller brush as the bear passed through. Once the grizzly came out and stood in full sight. He was near a towering granite bowlder. A chill of fear went through Bugle and he lay flat to the ridge. The huge bear stopped for a moment weaving his head from side to side. It seemed he was looking dan-

gerously near where the dog lay but he could not have seen Bugle, and he could not have scented him, for the wind was driving down from the north over the bear and toward Bugle.

The grizzly turned his head to the north and reared up to his great height on his hind feet, dropped down to his all fours again and started on through the brush and thickets toward the north, still following along the shelving ground.

Bugle could have got back into the woods immediately, but his hate and fear of this enemy made him want to watch him. He slunk along near the top of the ridge for a full half mile, cautiously watching. Finally he saw the huge gray back pass through some brush and the grizzly moved gradually down the slope toward a valley, and headed now toward the northeast.

Bugle moved back into the heavy woods that grew on a long hillside on the west, and a number of times he stopped and anxiously looked back. He saw nothing but the dark

trees and heard only the wind as it blew in a steadily rising gale. It was getting colder and something warned him that a storm was coming, but he was desperately hungry. In his starving condition the small rabbit had only made him want more.

As he hunted for game, he passed among thickets that stood high above him and screened his view on all sides except for short distances. He veered more and more to the west and at last found himself in another valley covered with a dense forest of pine.

The night was again coming down. Presently he came to a small tangle of fallen trees where there was some protection from the wind. He stood for a time looking uneasily at the place, and once he moved in among the dead sticks and pine needles, turning around as if he were about to lie down. Then he remembered how he lay under the creek bank and the wolves had found him. He was afraid to chance the night here. He moved on, hurrying this way and that, trying for a safer place. The farther he ran on the more

open the woods became. He ran around the trees, sometimes limping on three legs, sometimes running on all four. Suddenly the night fell dark around him. The wind cut him like a knife and he grew more and more alarmed. He stopped once, then turned off to the northwest and started down a slope, which, if he had followed, would have led him to a large area of the most densely matted brush around an ice-covered lake,—but an accident stopped him. It was now pitch dark. Halfway down the low incline, he fairly ran against a prospector's deserted hut—a small structure built of stone and logs. On one side the building had fallen in, but in one corner there was a sizable space free from wind and snow. Bugle got into this corner and lay down. It was a poor shelter, yet as it happened, he was fortunate in finding it, for he had not been there a quarter of an hour when one of those dangerous western blizzards struck. Bitter cold as it had been before, it had been nothing compared to the continuous rushing blast that now drove down.

When the blizzard struck, Bugle at once got up and paced around the small space to keep from freezing. All night he was compelled to keep moving. When morning came the storm was still raging. The whirling, rushing snow was so dense that the day was almost as dark as night. The morning saw no change in the storm, nor did the next night, and again Bugle paced about under the miserable cover. At times he stopped and stood listening at the roar of the storm. But he did not stand still long. The cold was extreme and the wind at times whipped under his shelter and cut him to the bone.

About the middle of this night, while the storm roared in the black darkness, and while Bugle suffered and battled to keep from freezing, he heard sounds that he knew were not made by the storm. He had lived his brief life among cattle. He knew he heard above the roar of the storm, the sounds of bawling cattle. With his ears pricked up, he stood in the inky blackness and listened. The sounds ceased; he still listened but he could

hear them no more. The bawling had sounded down the slope near the vast tangle of matted thickets that grew around the lake. The night was so black Bugle could not see a foot beyond him but he stood with his head toward the lake, listening.

These sounds of bawling cattle meant just one thing to him and filled him with a great eagerness to know more of them. Always he had associated cattle with his friends, with Mary and Wade Norman and Jim Carnarvon and the others. Were some of his friends down there in the night? In his eagerness he paced about and whined and cried, sat down and stood up again, and again walked nervously around the small confines of his shelter. Finally he was unable longer to endure the suspense. He moved out of the corner, pushed between the edge of the fallen roof and the logs, and started out. But the moment he got into the clear, the blinding snow drove in his eyes and mouth and hurled him back gasping, and he struggled again into his shelter.

He knew he could not make his way through the storm and live. Throughout the night he would sit down for a brief interval and sometimes lie down, then get up again and pace about, and he continued to suffer not only from the intense cold, but from an almost unbearable anxiety and hope that filled him. As the hours dragged he stood time after time, and pointed his eyes and nose toward the frozen lake, pricking up his ears and listening intently.

But he could hear nothing save the quiver and groan of the half-fallen roof above him and the blizzard roaring through the night.

Chapter XV

THE LONG, LONG TRAIL

MORNING came. The day was clear and bitter cold. A cutting wind whipped down from the north, sending sheets of snow racing over the frozen drifts, and hissing through the matted thickets around the lake below. East and west of this mountain tarn, the snowy slopes and naked granite walls rose up thousands of feet while the approaches from the north and south were open.

Bugle got out of his miserable shelter and started toward the dense brush around the lake. He limped because his wounded hip was again very stiff. He moved straight down to the brush but saw nothing and smelled nothing until he was about halfway across the south edge of the thickets. Here he stopped suddenly and shrank back. The wind had brought the scent of grizzly to him and it also

brought the smell of fresh meat. It seemed to be almost under his nose. Moving back a little he stood watching. A sharp gust of wind drove fine snow in his eyes; he closed them but did not move his nose. Yes, there was the certain smell of feed. He licked his lips and started forward, his head up, his eyes shining. Starvation was driving him in.

He reached the outer edge of the tangled brush, where there was a narrow lane leading in. A foot of snow covered this narrow open trail and there were signs of foot-prints which were nearly filled with the driven snow. Bugle used caution, but not the caution he would have used if hunger pangs had not been gnawing at him. He moved in a little nearer, slowly, but still nearer. The lane led around a tall overhanging thicket. Bugle stopped, listened, then slowly moved around this thicket. Before his eyes was a killed and partly eaten heifer. This was the feed that he had smelled, one of Jake Wilson's cattle that had strayed from the far north range, and, on being caught in the storm, had run

with it. Far down the valley she had raced and then in the night found this shelter; but she had also found death, for, as it happened, the outlaw grizzly himself had crowded into the brush and heard the bawling as the cow came on. In the black storm she had run fairly against him. He had broken her neck with one blow from his paw and then he had gorged on his kill. Three times, some two hours before dawn, the restless grizzly had left his kill, but three times he had come back to it. The fourth time he had passed out of one of the lanes in the thicket, and had not returned.

A wolf, even a starving wolf, would likely have hesitated before attacking this feed. Bugle knew the danger even better than a wolf for he had had experience with this giant enemy. But Bugle was not a wolf. He maneuvered about until he stood on the edge of the brush where the fresh trail of the grizzly led away toward a drop in the valley a little beyond, where lay another valley thick-set with pines.

The trail showed plainly where the beast had moved through the snow, his vast feet sinking in and plowing through. The grizzly had gone to the break in the valley to descend. There were no tracks on either side. But Bugle did not look at the trail, he stood at the edge of the thicket, looking sharply down on the pines in the valley.

He reasoned that the foe was somewhere down there. And still he stood looking, but could see nothing save the monotonous swirling of the snow over the frozen waste, and farther down, the dreary valley and pines. The wind rushed with a savage roar through the thickets behind him and struck him with a blast that made him shiver. He turned about, and went in to the carcass of the heifer. Ravenously he fell upon the feed, pulling and tearing at the frozen meat and gorging himself with all haste. But as often as he pulled and tore and ate, he watched both approaching lanes in the thick brush. Once he stopped feeding and hurried out to look down toward the pines. He saw nothing but the rapidly

filling trail and the ever-whirling snow caught up and carried on by the driving north wind. Down near the valley of the pines where the trail disappeared, the wind blew up a vast cloud of snow that for a time completely shut off the view. Then wind and snow veered off to the west and again there were only the trees and the cold.

Bugle hastened back to the feed. He took a long chance. He again pulled and tore off great strips of the frozen meat and ate as fast as he could, but as he pulled and tore, he kept his face toward the openings that led in to the kill. His eyes shone with a wild greenish light and they moved constantly from one opening to the other.

He stopped suddenly, and listened. The wind drove through the brush, whirling the snow in a fog so dense that he could not see into the lanes. Bugle had scented nothing, for the wind was from the north, and he had heard nothing except the wind roaring and hissing through the thickets. But something had warned him. Possibly he was uneasy

because for a moment the flying snow hid his view; then, he did hear a sound, not quite like the wind in the thickets. It was only a little sound, on the brush, but it warned him. He did not run out on the trail on which he had come in, but on the other. It was this move that barely saved him. As he started a vast bulk loomed in the cloud of whirling snow and the giant grizzly struck at him—struck with a growl and a roar. Out of the thicket Bugle ran, the grizzly rushing hard after him. Danger lent strength to the dog's wounded hip. He ran on all four legs but the hip handicapped him badly and strive as he would he could not increase his lead. Up the slope he ran toward the hut, and held his lead, but the grizzly was pushing him desperately. Bugle ran into the tumble-down hut. The gray beast rushed up, scattered the frail logs on one side, then, seeming to know where the dog was crouching, he ran around to that corner, still upright, and with crushing blows struck the logs aside and for an instant Bugle was like a bird in an open nest.

He leaped clear as the grizzly rushed over the mass of débris, and headed down the slope toward the tangled thickets around the frozen lake. He got a fair lead but the grizzly came down with astonishing speed. If Bugle had been in condition the race would have been nothing, but as it was, he battled every foot of the way to make his escape. He ran into one of the lanes in the brush and out again at another opening. The bear rushed in, crashed through the brush this way and that, and Bugle was out and a full hundred yards away on the open plain before the beast saw him. The grizzly came on, but Bugle reached the woods below and ran as fast as he could with his weakened muscles. He swerved around the trees and brush, now and then plunging through a scattering thicket, until he had covered fully two miles, then he stopped with his head down, panting, on the bank of a frozen river. He could neither see nor hear any sign of his enemy so finally turned and walked along the margin of the

river for another mile, stopping often to look back and listen.

Presently he struck directly across the woods and came out to the foot of a high snow-covered hill where he plodded slowly up until he reached the summit. On all sides of him now he saw only a vast frozen wilderness of rocks and pines and lonely mountains. As he stood there, panting, the longing for home came over him, came as it had come before, but always fate had driven him farther away.

Which way was home? He was many, many miles from that place and he sensed this, but as he stood on the hill, in a land of hunger and death, the Maker whispered in his brain—whispered in that instinct that no man understands, and Bugle knew what direction to take. He did not know why he knew. He thought nothing at all save that he was going to start on that long, long journey—he knew it was long! But one thing he had desired had come. For although nature

herself had fought him, she now stayed her hand, and Bugle was between the grizzly and the distant land on the south.

So he turned and started south. Bugle did not know where his enemy was, he only knew that he had escaped him.

If Bugle had been a man he would have marveled that old One-Toe, the curse of the cattle country, should travel so far from his kills of the summer. The reason of course was plain. The grizzly had been so long and so much hunted by the men, that he had learned a new trick; he eluded them by traveling farther, much farther, than they supposed he would travel.

But now, the time was already at hand when the cunning cattle killer would start far to the south where he knew he might sneak up on young cows in lonely glens, kill them, have his feast, and slip away among the trees and the cliffs of the mountains as he had so often done in the years before.

So, after he had failed in killing the dog

on this day, as he had killed the other three, he stood for a time looking toward the woods where Bugle had disappeared, then ambled back to his game in the thicket and fed until he was satisfied. This done he came out of the thickets, uttering low growls and sat down. Here he looked down the slope toward the trees in the valley and far beyond to the high mountain peaks in the south, and his cunning brain was working as he looked. He knew that there was summer and winter, and day and night, and the harvest,—the harvest of freshly killed cattle, the quivering flesh, and the blood, and with one last look at the distant snow-capped peaks, he licked his great teeth, arose and started,—started with a fixed purpose; and through the cold winter day he traveled on—almost on the trail of Bugle, only Bugle's trail was now on a high hill range and the trail of the grizzly was in the depths of the valley.

As the bear traveled he gathered speed, swinging along in great strides, plowing

through the deep stretches of snow; at times in the more barren places, moving almost at a lumbering run.

Not many more days and he would be in the land where he killed the cattle. And Bugle, hours later, moving weary and slow on a high barren ridge to the right, looked down on the level, and saw his enemy. The dog stood tense, watching the grizzly pass along on the open below, his huge gray form looming sinister and deadly in the gloom of the dark winter day.

The grizzly passed across the open plain, turned a little to the southeast, and disappeared in some low foothills.

With his head held high, Bugle stood watching for a moment, then he moved down the mountain to the cover of the woods along a river and he also traveled toward the south.

Chapter XVI

FRIENDS FOR A NIGHT

It was seven days later.

About one hundred miles southwest of the frozen lake and matted brush where the young cow had been killed was a great bend of heavy timber near the river. Here in these woods, two trappers, old Job Pettis and his son, Bob, were camping for the winter in a log hut.

It was a fearful night—a night of storm. Driving snow and wind roared through the forest in the pitch black darkness. Bob Pettis threw more wood on the fire and both men got into their bunks. In spite of the cold the trapping had been good, and after a brief conversation and a few comfortable yawns they both fell asleep.

It was far in the night when they were awakened by sounds outside the door,—a

whining and scratching, sounding above the roar of the storm. They got up quickly. The fire had burned low. Old Job threw more wood on the fire and the blaze lighted up the hut. Again came the whining and scratching at the door.

Old Job spoke. "Sounds like a dog, Bob—what do you think?"

"It does," said Bob, "but we better be careful." He picked up his rifle from a corner and opened the door.

A rush of wind and swirling snow drove in, and with it came a great crying, starving, freezing dog.

"The poor devil," exclaimed Bob Pettis, closing the door.

The dog did not cower or grovel, or seem frightened before the two trappers, but stood looking first into the face of one man and then the other, uttering little low moans.

"The poor devil," repeated old Job Pettis, "he's starving, Bob. We must feed him."

They gave him food in plenty,—all they thought he would stand in his emaciated con-

dition. The crude bread cakes and portions of cold meat they threw to him vanished almost as soon as they struck the floor. He wanted more and they gave him still another feed, the while commenting on his wounded hip, and wondering what had caused it.

Finally they fixed the wooden bar on the door more securely and both men got into their bunks for the night. They pulled their blankets over them and lay for a time looking at Bugle. He had curled up before the fire and seemed sound asleep.

"He's sure in terrible shape," mused old Job. "Wouldn't have made it much longer unless he had found us. We'll feed him again in the morning. It's queer where he came from." Both men soon fell asleep.

Morning came and the storm still roared. Two days and two nights the wind shrieked and howled and the snow drove down from the wild dark heavens.

Bugle lay in the hut during these two days and fed from the generous supply the men gave him. They saw, however, that while he

was friendly his mind was constantly occupied with some kind of anxiety and trouble. Each time after he had eaten he would lie down before the fire and close his eyes. If they spoke to him he would raise his head and pat his tail on the floor, but immediately he would lie quiet again. Once or twice each day he stood before the door and waited until one of the men raised the wooden pin. Bugle would then go with them as far as the near-by pile of firewood. Twice while out with one of them he whined and moved off a little in the driving snow but both times he came back.

On the third day the storm ceased and when night came it was a night of stars,—and bitter cold.

The two men fed Bugle as usual and got into their bunks. They saw him curl up before the fire and seemingly go to sleep. Sometime in the night both men were awakened by the intense cold. The door was open and the freezing wind driving in. Bob Pettis sprang up and dropped the wooden bar in

place that held the door. "By Jove," he exclaimed, "he's pushed up the bar and gone."

"It's too bad," said old Job. "I hoped he'd stay, but he belongs to somebody and he can't rest 'til he gets there."

When morning came old Job and Bob followed the dog's trail for two miles. It was hard work for the two men but it had been harder work for Bugle. Time after time they found where he had plunged down through the snow that covered a thicket. Once, on the north side of a creek, he had broken through and fallen into a ten-foot drift. He had come out of this to the barren ice on the creek, and climbed a steep, rocky bank to the snow-covered woods above.

Out on a little level stretch of frozen snow in the gloom of the silent woods, old Job and Bob both stopped and hesitated.

"Let's go on, maybe he'll stop," said Bob.

"Maybe he will," old Job agreed and they followed on, sometimes through a stretch of snow in the open, sometimes pushing through vines and underbrush, and sometimes climb-

ing high banks where the dog's trail led them. A mile further they plodded, then stopped.

"It's no use, Bob," said Job. "He's a good dog and a smart one. He's lost from home and trying to get there."

They gave it up and turned back.

Chapter XVII

IN THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW

AFTER Bugle left the hut that night he found the going very hard for the first three miles. When the stream turned off sharply to the west, he left it and presently passed through the woods to a stretch of open ground, bordered on either side with smooth-snowy hills. He moved out in the open and hurried on.

This valley led almost straight south and as far as Bugle could see there lay before him only the level white valley and the two white hills rising high above it on either side. He disliked travel on the higher ground because of the cutting wind. It was not much better where he was, still there were many spaces where the snow was very thick and by holding to these he was making good time.

The day passed. It was pitch dark when

he came out of the open valley and again found himself in woods along the river. It was the same stream he had followed earlier, only Bugle had saved many miles by traveling through the open. It happened also that this was the same stream the grizzly was following—following leisurely and keeping to the shelter of the vast forest.

Bugle stopped and stood still. He was very uneasy because it was night. Nevertheless a hiding place must be found. When he had passed some distance, he came upon a mass of vines and brush at a bend in the stream where there was an almost precipitous bank reaching down to the ice and snow. The mass of vines offered shelter. Bugle crowded in, pawed out a place in the dead pine needles and here he lay down with his head up, still uneasy and troubled.

Within an hour the snow ceased falling. By midnight the moon was shining and the wind had died away almost completely. As the time passed Bugle became more restless. During the day his hip had been much bet-

ter, but lying still made it feel stiff again and even his trembling from the cold sent pain through his wound. He could bear this quiet no longer and getting up he moved limpingly down along the upper margin of the precipitous bank.

Farther down he came to a point where the slope to the river was more gentle and covered with straggling bushes. He loped down this slope, but was compelled to halt when he reached a jutting rocky ledge. There was a space under this ledge that looked inviting and Bugle walked in under the rock and lay down. In the bright moonlight he could see across to the other side of the gorge, and also far down on the snow-covered ice below. He lay with his head up, watching, for he could not sleep. On the other side of the gorge, there loomed the dark shapes of bushes growing from the earth and rocks, and also he could see mysterious, yawning caverns. There was almost dead silence here, but every bush and shadowy spot across the gorge seemed to hold possible danger. It was not so much the

dread of a smaller foe, but always the gray monster, that troubled Bugle and preyed on his mind like a hideous nightmare.

Again the wound hurt him; and again he got up, moved up the bank, and lay down in the tangle of vines up in the forest. In vain he tried to rest a little but there was no rest here for him, because his pain, but greater still, his unutterable longing to reach home, drove him forward.

The moon sank over the western hills and the night grew darker.

Bugle trotted on through the forest and in a little time his hip was again easy. It was in reality healing rapidly. At first he found very little underbrush and was making good time, heading straight south when he ran afoul of a mass of dense thickets, so dense that he hesitated, then started off to the left. A narrow way that he could just make out led between the tall overhanging brush and he pushed into the opening, the overhanging twigs of the thickets constantly brushing his face. He had not gone ten rods when suddenly

he felt himself slipping down. He tried violently to recover himself but lurched into a treacherous, dangerous hole, fully twenty feet deep. He fell hard on a frozen crust of snow below and was badly shaken but not much hurt. Instantly he got to his feet and looked up. In the dim starlight above he saw nothing save the branches of a tree above him. This was a small, up-rooted pine that had fallen halfway down the hole and still held by some of its roots.

Bugle stood panting for a moment then strove desperately to climb out up in the direction of the tree. He could not make three feet of the steep sides of frozen snow. Around and around his prison he moved and tried to get up, and again and again he failed.

Daylight found him lying down, exhausted and panting for breath. Noon, and the bright sun was shining and then came one of those strange things in nature. A little after noon a warm Chinook wind blew in from the west, and winter suddenly changed to summer. By mid-afternoon the snow crusts were softening.

Again night fell. The hard snow around the lower part of the hole was clawed in scores of places where Bugle had tried to climb out. But always he slid back on the frozen crust. He struggled until midnight then lay down and panted for breath until the dawn.

The warm winds were melting the snow rapidly above and slowly softening the crust in the hole. For the first time, when Bugle started to climb out on this morning, his feet sank through the crust and he could hold. Slowly he worked up a distance. Here he held, panting and resting; and again he moved slowly up, sinking his long legs deep through the crust. He was within a foot of the top, quivering in utter weakness, when he made one desperate struggle, got one fore-paw over the top, then the other, and lurched out on the level.

He fell at full length on the snow. The ribs and hips of his giant brindle body protruded fearfully. Only his heaving sides showed that life was still in him. A strange

contrast he was to the white snow around him.

The wind was still blowing warm. It was one of those unusual seasons when spring had come in middle March, and had come to stay.

Bugle did not know this, he only knew that as he lay at full length resting, he did not suffer from the cold. At last he got up, gulped a few mouthfuls of snow and started down through the woods.

He had not gone far when he heard flapping and fluttering sounds ahead of him and quickening his pace, came around a thicket to an open glade. A great horned owl, desperate with hunger, had just killed a skunk. Bugle rushed. The owl, hissing and cracking his beak, flew up and alighted on a pine bough.

The feed was not desirable, it was even obnoxious to Bugle, but he fell upon it for he was starving. He tore the carcass and gorged himself with the meat; with his mighty jaws even crunching the bones and swallowing them. It was the worst meal he had ever

eaten but it put blood and strength in him.

After feeding, he moved on a little farther where he found a resting place in a depression under the roots of a giant pine. The day was so comfortable, and so much did Bugle want rest, that he lay all that day and that night in the hole under the pine. When morning came he started toward the south and for three days he traveled, but now he did not make rapid progress for, although he was traveling in the direction of home he was constantly forced to turn aside and hunt feed as he traveled. His hunger was incessant and his body called for more and more. He made wide detours through the forest, and sometimes, when he scented the trail of game, he doubled back on his trail for more than a mile.

Early one morning, as he was moving noiselessly as a cat through some open woods, he found himself on the deeply shaded bank of a creek. The ice was gone and there came the drone of the water, but the soft wet snow lay along the sloping banks on the other side.

Bugle was about to go down and drink when a mink suddenly ran by. He leaped, seized it, and with one shake killed it. This was a good meal. He went down to the water's edge and satisfied his thirst. The creek was narrow, deep and very cold, but Bugle plunged into the icy water and swam across. He climbed up to the woods on the other side, stopped and vigorously shook himself, sending the water in a fine spray from his harsh brindle coat. He had crossed many streams when moving northward with Lute Boggs, but he had crossed them on the hard snow and ice. The creeks he had to swim now were not difficult, but he was approaching a stream that was to give him trouble. Bugle did not sense this. He only knew he was headed in the right direction and that, if he came to a stream blocking his way, he must cross it.

He hunted slowly southward for another three days, halting often to lie down and rest. In these three days he found not a bite of food. All one night he lay half awake, half asleep on the soft earth under the branches of

a fallen tree. With the dawn he started again. On rounding a windfall he came upon a weasel, seized it, and swallowed it almost at one gulp.

In this vicinity he hunted until well along in the afternoon but found no more game, so started on south. It was not long until he reached a place that troubled him. He passed out of a fir forest to a small valley that was cut off on the south by a river. Here he stopped to look about him. Just north of the place where he stood, perhaps not more than a quarter of a mile, was the mouth of a canyon opening into the valley. This canyon at its mouth was narrow with very high walls; the east side was of solid rock, while that on the west showed both rocks and earth and it was not so steep, but was covered with bushes that grew well down to the bottom. Just where the canyon ended in the valley, there was a tall heavy growth of thickets and scrub. Over the valley were scattering bushes, and here and there a thicket, covering considerable ground.

Bugle stood for several minutes looking to-

ward the canyon, then turned his head toward the south and at once started in that direction. Presently he stood on the bank of the river. The shore on the near side of this stream was of earth and rock, and almost perpendicular. In places this bank did not rise high above the water, but at other points it stood up thirty and forty feet, the bank, on the opposite side, for some distance being a high, perpendicular wall of rock. The stream was rapidly rising from the freshets made by the rapidly melting snow in the mountains.

Bugle stood on the edge of one of the low banks and looked out on the fast-moving waters. He whined uneasily and trotted eastward along the bank for a long distance, then he came back and ran down the river, looking across at the other side. Again he came back. He knew he must cross but the high banks of the other side and the flood itself made him fearful. He sat down and looked about him without moving. Where he sat, near the edge of the bank, it was not more than a few feet high. He held to this place, for,

if he must leap in, he wanted to do so at the lowest point.

Just to the right of him, not more than a dozen feet away, the river had washed under a giant tree so that it had fallen with half its roots still holding in the bank. The top of the tree had been carried somewhat down stream where it lay at an angle. In this way much drift had not only lodged against the tree, but was backed in toward the bank where there was a small bend and a quiet eddy. A patch of dense brush stood behind the place where Bugle sat. He turned, walked up to the thicket and lay down under the south edge of it. But the river made him uneasy and he got up, this time to move out a little on the valley. He was hungry and started to hunt, but after nosing about listlessly for a time he came back. This deep river running between its high banks troubled him exceedingly. He knew he must cross it to get home. He lay down under the thicket, his head up, looking out on the stream and he was still looking when the evening fell and the moon came up to shine

on the dark angry waters. At last, being utterly weary, he put his head down and tried to go to sleep. He had made up his mind that he must wait—he did not know how long—and so, after dozing fitfully, and waking, his weary body at last gave up to nature's way, and he fell into a deep sleep, his great sides rising and falling with deep regular breaths.

His wounded hip was healing. This and the few feeds he had come upon, together with the warm days, had all helped to better his condition a little.

As he lay sleeping under the bushes, all was still save the sullen roar of the river, with now and then the sounds of the flood waters surging and lapping against the drift heap below.

As Bugle lay sleeping the river was rapidly rising. This, however, would have warned him as soon as the icy waters touched him and he could have run back to the higher ground. The other danger was more deadly. The grizzly moved out of the canyon above and stood for a time in the bright moonlight, point-

ing his nose toward the river and sniffing. Taking his time, he was moving toward the Wade Norman ranches. He weaved his head from side to side and moved forward, walked around a large thicket and again stopped to sniff toward the river. Again he came on. The sounds of his vast feet on the ground made no more noise than a puma. Suddenly he quickened his pace, but stopped and again sniffed the air.

Bugle lay very still, breathing deeply and regularly. An insect crawled from a twig in the thicket to his ear; he flicked the ear, but did not awaken.

Chapter XVIII

A GRIM CHASE

THE thicket under which Bugle lay asleep was only a few feet from the river. The stream had risen within two feet of the top of the bank at the low point where he lay. As the water swept down to the fallen tree it brought an ever-increasing mass of fine drift into the quiet back water. In this bend were crowded thousands of sticks and dead twigs, small logs and pieces of dead bark, all of which covered the quiet water so densely that it looked like solid earth, except for the incoming of each new lesser drift which gently moved and swayed the whole mass.

The grizzly still came on. He was coming directly toward the bush where Bugle lay. An unfriendly low wind was blowing across the water from the south.

Bugle had not the slightest warning of the

monster until the beast brushed the edge of the thicket. He leaped to his feet, saw the vast bulk, flashed one wild look as the grizzly rushed, ready to sweep him to death if he dodged on either side. It all happened in a second. Bugle took the only chance,—leaped out into the stream. He struck the fine drift in the eddy, went almost under, but swam desperately out in the stream, when there came a terrific splash as the grizzly followed after him. The waves rocked Bugle violently, throwing water in his eyes and nose, and nearly strangling him. The grizzly struck twice at the dog as he swam, and once he would surely have ended him but a small tree drifted in toward the eddy, turned suddenly and shot out toward the point of the fallen pine. The branches of the floating tree struck the grizzly and momentarily turned him, but he plowed on through the water still close to the dog. They were both carried around the point and whether they willed it or not, the swift rushing water of the channel seized them and they

were whirled rapidly out and down stream. With a roaring growl the grizzly again struck for the head of Bugle and so close that the waves rocked the dog. Suddenly there loomed on the face of the waters a vast drift of logs and tangled brush, with a small cedar, all jammed together. Bugle barely escaped the head of the drift as it shot between him and the grizzly. He made a struggle and got both front feet on the edge of the débris and managed to hold on. The grizzly splashed two huge paws on the sticks and logs on the other side and he also held on.

The current changed here and ran at a long angle toward the other side of the river. Bugle knew nothing of this. He only knew that he was almost exhausted and in mortal terror. He was not a good swimmer, often lifting his long forelegs and splashing them upon the water to keep his head above the stream. The grizzly faced him only a few feet away. Twice he roared and struck the drift savagely. A small log sank under his blow and floated out

alone, but the mass of logs and tangled brush still held. The drift swept down where there were low banks on either side.

The grizzly was facing the shore toward which the drift was moving. Possibly he knew that if the dog reached the bank he would escape, or, it may be the beast did not reason at all, but followed a mere instinct to kill Bugle and kill him at once. At any rate, as the drift neared the bank, he uttered horrible rumbling growls and began striking the drift with all his might. He beat a part of it to pieces but the main part of it still held together.

While the bear beat upon the drift, Bugle clung desperately to the other side, nearly half his body out of the water. Once the grizzly struck a mass of brush with appalling force, throwing a spume of water in Bugle's face. Time after time the huge beast tried to climb up on the drift but the mass only swayed with his movements and he could find no footing for his hind feet. The drift passed swiftly around a bend in the river, whirled around

once like a cork and shot in to a low bank. The grizzly's hind feet touched bottom; he left the drift, and lunged out of the water to the bank. The drift, with Bugle still clinging to it, was whirled farther out. The grizzly ran along the bank keeping even with the floating logs and brush. Once the drift started in toward the bank and Bugle in desperation let go his hold; he sank in the water but almost immediately got his paws on the rear end of the drift as it was passing him. It was whirled once around and again was swept farther out. He held to the mass, his eyes wild with fright as he saw the gray monster running along the shore. The drift swept farther and still farther out. Finally it rode down near a stony point running out from a high rocky shore. The drift struck hard on this point and was scattered into pieces on the dark waters. Bugle went clear under, came up, and swam blindly on. He was swimming now between two high banks and tall, dark forests. Only the upper rim of the moon shone above a mountain top, then it sank from sight and deep

darkness covered the waters between the forests.

Bugle swam with the stream.

Suddenly the current swept him toward the left shore, at the same time throwing a mass of driftwood against him. He was carried under some overhanging thickets near the bank, where the twigs brushed his eyes and almost blinded him. He brought up against the overhanging roots of a tree where his feet touched bottom and then he crowded up a little farther and stood for a time in water which half covered him. Looking up the low steep bank he could see nothing save the darkness of the forest. Slowly he crawled up the muddy, brush-covered bank into the woods.

There was no sound save that of the angry river below him. He wanted to rest but the place was too strange and dark, so with head down and walking slowly, he began moving away from the river. He passed through the belt of dark spruce and came out from the trees to a rough open country. Here he stood on an open hillock, and looked beyond him at

great upheavals of naked granite rocks standing still and lonely in the starlight.

Wet and quivering, he proceeded down the knoll to the base of a higher hill, climbed slowly to the summit of this and threw himself down. He could watch from this higher point. As he lay panting, he now and then drew in his tongue quickly and gasped in a small quick breath. The musical tinkle of a little spring below came to his ears, and getting to his feet again he walked down and drank. The spring bubbled from under a jutting ledge in the hillside where there was a small cavern. Bugle passed into the cavern beside the spring, and all night lay beside the murmuring water.

When dawn came he had not moved. As the gray light brightened into a lighter hue he came out and at once moved up to the hill-top. For a time he stood to his full great height and looked.

The hill where he stood went down into a quiet valley. On the opposite side arose a mountain of high rocky cliffs and jutting

granite ledges. In the center of the valley was an aspen swale reaching well down to a forest of hemlocks on the south. Bugle looked up and down the valley, then at the cliffs and jutting ledges on the opposite side. Suddenly he pricked up his ears, then dropped to the ground with only his head slightly raised as he looked across toward the high ledges. The scent had struck him first, but now he saw.

Moving down along the granite cliffs was a gray form—gigantic, deadly—there was no mistaking it. The grizzly stopped on a ledge high up the mountain side, stood and looked toward the south, moved up on a higher ledge and kept on until he reached the point where the mountain dipped far down toward the hemlock forest on the south. On that high peak he paused for a moment, his vast shape standing outlined against the eastern sky. At last he started down the slope, and stopped only once, pointing his nose out and weaving his head in a peculiar manner, then he went on.

Down the hill, at an angle, he moved in a

lumbering stride. At the bottom he turned sharply and came up to the aspen swale, plunged through the trees into the water, drank a little and plunged farther in, until the water rose well up on his sides, then splashing out of the swale on the other side, he again stopped and pointed his nose outward and weaved his head. The outlaw was sniffing the air for any signs of his enemies. He was traveling toward the green slopes and valleys where he would kill more cattle, and back in his small brain was the sinister remembrance of the men, and in particular of Bugle. He had killed three like him, and the blood lust for killing this one was in his head constantly. And, as often as he ceased hunting for game, he again thought of this enemy and as often as he thought of him, he stopped and pointed out his nose and weaved his head, trying to get the scent of him.

Bugle did not stir. His head was low on the ground, only his eyes showed his fear and hate. The hair came up in a long mane on his shoulders and he lay, a great brindle mass on

the barren hill-top. The grizzly turned and started down the aspen swale. Bugle's eyes followed him like a hawk's but he did not move. Still the grizzly ambled along. He slouched into some clumps of hemlock, came out in the open for a moment, then passed on into the somber depths of a tamarack forest.

A few minutes passed. Bugle cautiously raised his head, pricked up his ears and looked toward the tamaracks. He got up, and with his head turned constantly sidewise so that he could watch the valley, he ran down to the swale, stopped for a little in the open to look, then pushed in through the trees to the water where he drank. When he returned to the open, he looked at the point where the grizzly had disappeared, but he could see nothing there but the brooding, sighing forest.

Bugle passed around the head of the swale, crossed to the other side of the valley and climbed high up the mountain side. Far out on one of the jutting ledges he stopped and looked intently down on the forest where the grizzly had disappeared. Bugle uttered a low

sound of fear and anger which turned into an anxious whine. He knew that was the direction of home. He himself had expected to enter the forest there and travel on through. Now, however, he was afraid to do that, and knew he must go far around that place. He walked back from the ledge, and working slowly, picked his way around to the top of this high hill where it sloped down to the forest of tamarack. Presently he reached the summit where the grizzly had stood and sniffed the air. The scent of the bear was very strong here. Bugle sniffed the earth and rocks whereon the bear had stood, and then stood on the high eminence looking down toward the lowlands on the southwest.

There he discovered something that put hope and joy in him. Far below lay some bottoms covered with dead grass and scattering patches of snow. A herd of wild horses was feeding on the withered grass where the snow had melted away. To Bugle, the horses suggested his human friends. Surely some of them must be near-by.

With an eager whine he ran down the mountain, circled west to a ridge and worked his way along for a considerable distance until he came out of some scrub on a high knoll. Just below him, on the right, the wild horses were contentedly feeding. Less than twenty-five feet from the place where Bugle stood, the slope ended in a broad shelf of rock, below which the wild horses had made a trail. The trail at this point, perhaps for the space of ten rods, was dangerously near a precipitous cliff that dropped sheer for a hundred feet to an alder thicket below.

It all happened in an instant. When Bugle came out in the open he saw two things at once. A colt, that had wandered a little away from the wild horses was coming leisurely along the rocky trail to join them; at the same time, lying on the rocky ledge, just above the place where the colt must pass, was a mountain lion, crouching, tail twitching, ready to spring!

The sun was shining bright and warm on

the little knoll and cliff. The place itself seemed hushed at the impending calamity. For a moment the great form of the dog stood like a statue, and the puma flattened itself close to the ledge watching the oncoming colt.

In that pulsating instant Bugle was decided. He believed that the colt was the property of men, perhaps of his own friends. He sensed that the approaching colt was only a few yards from its death and to save it he must instantly throw his life in the balance. His instinct told him that the long, lithe thing crouching on the rock was deadly dangerous. And but for the colt, Bugle never would have taken the chance that he did. But now he threw caution to the winds. At the instant the great cat leaped Bugle rushed out. As the puma struck the back of the terrified colt, Bugle leaped upon the puma, and with such violent impact that both he and the big cat were whirled over the cliff, while the colt, not much hurt, scrambled to his feet and ran toward the herd.

Helplessly Bugle hurtled downward with the puma. There came one terrible thud in the alder thicket, and then all was still.

The minutes passed. A little gray bird, flitting through the alder thicket, paused to look down, then flew away frightened. Another faint sound came and a cottontail rabbit stopped, raised to a sitting position, looked about intently, and slipped away.

Finally there came a low groan and Bugle slowly raised his head. At the same time he was aware of a dangerous smell. Fully conscious, he saw where he was, and with a whine dragged himself from off the dead body of the puma. Only the soft body of the beast had saved him. Staggering a little, he made for a spring that gushed from some near-by rocks. When he had finished drinking he dropped down on the ground, and at once fell asleep.

He was awakened by violent snorting and the clatter of many hoofs. The wild horses coming down from the north to drink had scented him. Bugle stood up and watched

their retreating forms, then being ravenous for food, he went back to the carcass of the puma and fed until satisfied.

Filled with new strength, Bugle at once set out toward the south.

Chapter XIX

JIM CARNARVON

It was the next morning that Jim Carnarvon walked along the margin of a sandy draw, leading his horse, and looking intently at the ground, often stopping to look quickly down the valley in front of him. He had found the trail of the grizzly. The foot-prints were particularly plain in the sand beside the long sandy draw.

Riding out a little before the dawn, Jim had made another start in his hunt for the bear. The beast had been seen twice already by two of the men farther north. The cattle killer was back on the range ready for his evil deeds. On this particular morning Wade Norman and a number of his men had ridden out to hunt the bear in the northeast, leaving Jim to hunt as he wished, to the northwest.

Jim walked along the sandy draw until it

faded out near the foot of a bluff at the head of the valley. The tracks of the bear still showed plainly where the beast had walked up the bluff toward some rolling country beyond. Jim mounted, and letting his horse walk, followed.

The trail headed almost straight north for three miles. It was not hard to follow, for it held steadily along open ground and scattering tufts of grass. Now the tracks turned toward a pine wood, but the bear had not entered the forest. The tracks led along the edge of the trees for a few yards, then turned off to the east, then down and around a sharp curve of a bluff, and then up a shelving piece of ground, dotted with small pine trees. Jim lost the trail here and dismounted to search. Bending down, he found it again, and leading his horse, he moved slowly along the rather obscure trail where the grizzly had, for some reason, made a wide detour. Jim walked on, topped the crest of the hill and still followed the trail.

It led down to a level stretch where the un-

even ground, thick-set with huge rocks and pine trees, made riding almost impossible. By this time Jim was a long way from home.

He wanted to take no chances. He tied his horse securely to one of the tall straight pines on a little rise of ground, thinking as he did so that he would go on a little and get back to the horse if necessary. He started on. The trail was fresher still and at one spot the bear had stopped and dug away some rocks. Jim paused a moment, looking searchingly beyond, his rifle ready.

Down through a steep ravine the trail led, and up at a long angle on the other side where there was much brush and low trees. Jim followed slowly, cautiously, his keen eyes seeing every brush and tree. Certainly it was a very fresh trail. Time after time he saw where the grizzly had stopped, leaving all four of his huge tracks near together. The foot-prints led on up to a long barren incline. Jim crossed this and for many minutes followed the trail over low hills and the sharp dips between them. He was about to go back to his horse

when he saw the tracks turn back along the woods of a small creek. Moving stealthily down, he saw the grizzly had crossed the creek and again come back, and now the trail led on steadily in a circle until Jim realized he was within a short distance of his horse. He stopped to examine a spot where the bear had stopped and turned back a little, but almost at the same time he saw the tracks a little further on, and was just starting to follow them when he brought up with a start.

He saw the grizzly move out of some woods below, that grew within a few yards of a sharp turn in a steep hill. The grizzly had probably scented his enemy, for he broke into a run and rushed around the hill as Jim fired. The bullet tore an ugly wound in the animal's flesh. Roaring with pain and rage, the grizzly turned back for his human enemy, but at the same instant saw the horse leaping frantically within a few yards.

Jim hurried with all his might up the hill to a clump of trees. He was just in time to see the grizzly, with one sweep of his arm, crush

the horse's skull. Some pine trees below interfered with a perfect shot, but Jim fired twice and both times hit the grizzly. With a roar the beast rushed into the timber on the east. Evidently he did not know where the man stood, or had one of the shots proved fatal? Jim saw no more of him, although he waited for some time. He knew that it was a dangerous thing to follow the angry beast, yet he would not give up. He looked down the hill at his stricken mount. This had been his best horse and Jim Carnarvon vowed vengeance anew. His belt was full of cartridges, and he carried a heavy repeating rifle. One shot planted in the right place would do the work, but he knew he must use extreme caution.

He passed slowly down the hill, and stood on the trail where the grizzly had entered the woods.

Chapter XX

NEARING THE FATAL NORTH CANYON

BUGLE, moving at a lope, raised his head and stopped. He heard the distant report of a gun. For a moment he stood still, listening. He heard nothing more, but still he hesitated.

He started off through a pine woods when he again heard the sound of a gun. This time he stopped still and listened for several minutes. A death-like stillness pervaded the forest. Did the gun-shots mean friends or enemies? He ran back, crossed a small creek, passed on through the pine woods and came out on a small open barren, loped across this, and ran up a hillside dotted with scrub cedars. On the hill-top he stopped and stood looking across some rolling foothills in the direction from which the sounds of the gun had come.

With his nerves tingling he started forward at a run. His reason told him a human was

at the place where the sound was made. He wanted to locate him and have a look while a safe distance away. He ran on for nearly a mile, then came out on a valley where a stream coursed through, bordered on either side by willow and cottonwood trees.

Bugle immediately plunged in. The stream was deep, and he swam across. Out he leaped on the other side, plunged through the willows, and ran on to the foot of a steep bluff. Still running, he moved up the rocky hillside. When two-thirds of the way up, a steep ledge of rocks running along the bluff blocked him. He ran back for a considerable distance along the base of the ledge, then found a crevice where he could work his way up. Excited and quivering he got to the summit and stood looking north.

This hill range stretched well into the north where it ended in a vast area of conifers. The tops of these trees stretched far in the distance, finally vanishing in a low-hanging, blue haze. As Bugle stood looking, excited,

trembling, there was no sound save his own gentle panting. He looked off toward the east. The land was more open there with rising and falling knolls, small clumps of brush and scrub.

He decided to run in a wide circle in the more open spaces and accordingly set out at a run directly east. Up one knoll and down another he ran; around bushes and cedars, across a small water-filled slough, and on until he brought up on a long, wide level. He was running steadily with his head up but all of a sudden he stopped, whirled back on his trail a few feet, and began sniffing the ground. He uttered a low agonizing cry, and started to run, but again came back and again sniffed the ground; again and again he uttered that little groaning cry. Oh! it was *she!* He knew that scent. *She* had stood here, and now here was her horse moving to the northeast. Yes! He came back three times to sniff and then his reason made him very sure. Crying low like a long-lost child Bugle started out to follow

the horse's trail. Once he had difficulty in a very rocky stretch, but he only sniffed and hunted the harder; then again striking the hot trail, he ran on. He had forgotten everything else now—forgotten his hunger, although he was always hungry,—forgotten his fear. He must not let her get away,—he must keep running until he found her.

He was making good time for it was a warm trail, but now and then he was compelled to move slowly where the scent grew faint on stony ground, but always he found it again and ran rapidly with his nose to the ground.

Suddenly he stopped on a high plateau, conscious that he was approaching the place where he had heard the shots. However, he stood for an instant only. No matter now about that part of it. He knew he was on the trail of the girl. It mattered not where it led. He would go to her. *She* would take care of him. He trusted her. With a little cry of wild delight he ran on.

He sped down into a draw, crossed it, and loped up a hill where for a mile forward there

was a level covered with small bushes. He started to cross this higher ground but stopped as if he had been struck a blow.

To the north he heard faintly, but surely, a deep roar followed by a faint, but also certain, high-pitched scream. A wooded hill lay between him and the place from where the sounds had come. He ran across the level land and into the woods, ears up, listening as he ran. He passed through the woods on the hill and came out into another open space but again there were trees a short distance forward.

Again he heard the high-pitched scream and this time much louder and nearer.

Watching and listening, his head up constantly, he ran forward.

Chapter XXI

WHERE ARE THE MEN?

IT was about mid-afternoon that Mary Norman came upon the trail of Jim and crossed it. She was sure this was Jim's trail; she knew the direction he had taken. Mary would have ridden straight north in the hope of seeing him but she supposed that his plan was to turn finally northeast and join Wade and the other men in that direction. Mary had heard them speak of this plan early that morning, and she supposed if she rode northeast she would be able to ride back with both Jim and her father. She realized also that she might miss them altogether, for she was being careful to ride along the open spaces as Jim and her father had many times cautioned her to do. But this was too fine a day to be starting back as yet. Her horse, a nervous sorrel, seemed as fresh as when she started and he champed

at the bit each time she pulled him down to a walk. On reaching a level valley she let him go at a hard gallop for a quarter of a mile, then pulled him down to a slower pace.

At a point where the valley curved sharply to the north, she turned her horse along the base of a hill. On the other side of a shoulder in the bluff, she rode out into a valley on the far side of which was a long green ridge of hills, dotted here and there with giant gray rocks and stunted pines.

Mary rode leisurely down the valley, enjoying all she saw. Now and then, as her horse walked rapidly along, a meadow lark flew up and perched, swinging, on a small bush while he looked at her curiously.

At the upper end of the valley she came to a long water-filled swale and several water holes near-by. Mary was about to turn her horse to the right, to get around the mud and water, when a jack rabbit suddenly started up, almost under her horse's feet. The horse shied so quickly that Mary was almost thrown off, but she kept her seat and pulled her horse

to a stand. He had shied and leaped to the left of the bog. As Mary stopped him she thought she felt the saddle cinch give, and dismounted at once to look at it. She tightened the cinch and was about to remount when her horse, who had put his nose near the ground, suddenly snorted and lunged back. She held to him, and as he stood trembling and snorting she looked around, then down at the ground.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, with a little shudder running over her. "I see!" She was looking at huge bear tracks, monster tracks they were, with one toe missing on one front foot. The tracks were very plain along the water hole and she observed that the bear was headed north.

A sudden bold determination seized the girl. She knew she was riding a fast horse. There could be no possibility of danger to her, she told herself, if she kept to the open. And, suppose she should get sight of the grizzly and suppose she could plant a shot that would destroy him! Wouldn't it be a great surprise to the cattlemen far and near! And wouldn't

it be a feather in her cap? Just to think of it!

But as she rode forward, her heart beating a little faster, Mary felt a certain pricking of her conscience. She knew she was on the fresh trail of the grizzly and something kept telling her she should ride up to the highest hill at once and try to discover some of the men. So much did this trouble her that after she had ridden for a distance, looking at the grizzly's tracks, she turned her horse and rode east toward a hilltop. She was excited and trembling as her horse plunged up at an angle toward the summit of a steep hill. She told herself that even if she did not get a chance to shoot at the grizzly, it would be a big thing for her to put some of the men on his fresh trail. She knew that both her father and Jim, and a number of the other men had come in this general direction.

Her horse struggled on over the rough stones of the hillside, and near the top it was so steep he had to lunge violently up between two great bowlders, but he made it, and reached the summit. While her horse stood breathing

heavily from his exertion, Mary looked about her in every direction. For some time the girl watched, but there was not a horseman in sight. She was much disappointed. Still, her conscience was easier. She decided she would ride down in the valley and follow the trail of the grizzly, as long as it led in the open. At the same time she would keep a sharp watch for some of the men. She let her horse pick his way down to the low land and she started on again following the tracks. In a short time she found herself at a point where the valley ended in a sharp defile between two high foot-hills. The grizzly had been traveling along the low ground, at times walking near a water hole and at others walking along the sand at the margin of a long low gully. At one point the beast had stopped and faced the water. It was here that Mary now stopped her horse. She sat looking at the four huge foot-prints, and fear took hold of her so that she was almost minded to turn back. Yet, she reasoned, the men were all putting their whole energy into finding this very trail. Surely she should go

a little farther, in the hope of seeing some of them. She knew that none of them had been following the trail for there was not a single horse track to be seen.

As Mary sat her horse looking, she could see up on both the hillsides and also the other end of the defile, about five hundred yards away. There seemed to be more open ground there, but if there was, the valley turned to the left, because she could see a wooded slope beyond the defile and to the right. She decided to ride through the defile.

She let her horse walk for half the distance, the while looking intently toward the end of the cut, then stopped her mount and looked down for the trail, but none could be seen. There were only grass and small rocks and the marks where her horse had walked, but she saw no sign of the grizzly's trail. Again she let the horse move on slowly and looked down but saw not a sign of a foot-print—no evidence that even a stone had been disturbed. Mary supposed the grizzly had moved up one or the other of the hillsides. She rode back, picked

up the trail, found that it moved up a little on the hillside to the east, then headed north again, and, near the end of the defile, it again came down on the level.

Slowly, watchfully, Mary rode on through the cut. Again she saw the tracks of the grizzly as they lay plainly revealed along the sand of a dry run bed that led down a little valley toward the west. And this time when she looked at the tracks they fairly frightened her. Surely the grizzly had passed this way at a very late hour. Mary was troubled and anxious; and with it all she was afraid. She kept a tight hold on the reins of her horse, and at times felt of the butt of her rifle in its holster to be sure it was there. She was almost exasperated because she could not see some of the men. Where were they? Why was it that not a man was in sight when here was one of the best chances they might ever have to get close to the outlaw? Of course she could shoot and shoot straight. Mary knew that, but she knew also that the poor fellows whom the grizzly had killed had also been good shots.

And, when one began shooting at this wily foe, so much could happen!

It never occurred to Mary that the grizzly had seen the men, and that this was exactly why his trail led where no man was in sight. So now, she said to herself, surely if she could follow on a little longer she would see some of the rangers.

She had come out on a level plain with a small stream coursing through. The plain was covered with short, dead grass, with here and there green shoots showing through. Mary could see down this level for a mile or more and there it ended in heavily wooded hills. She told herself she would ride down to the woods and then turn and ride northwest up an open slope to her right.

A little farther on she passed some low, thick-set bushes. She rode through a number of these, the thickets brushing her feet in the stirrups. Suddenly her horse leaped and snorted. She lurched in the saddle but clung like a leech and righted herself. She was angry with the horse and cut him sharply with

her quirt, yet knew a second later this was wrong, and repented. She got him to a stand and patted his neck while he danced and champed at the bit. All the time Mary was watching the bunch of thickets the horse had been starting through, when he had plunged. She discovered some splashes of mottled red and white, and as she slowly circled on the dancing horse, she saw it was a dead cow. Finally she got a better view of the carcass. It was a young animal, probably a yearling. It had been killed lately, for blood was fresh on the ground near the head. It was extremely likely that the outlaw had killed the heifer for the mere lust of killing. He had often done this before, leaving the carcass untasted. The horse was snorting wildly.

Mary turned him back and let him have his head until she reached the open slope on the northwest, then put him at a good pace along the shelving ground until she gained the summit. There she stopped, breathing rapidly, her eyes wide with excitement. Oh! why could she not see Jim or her father or some

one of the men? They had all been hunting this savage beast for years and here was a chance that they might be years in coming upon! For it seemed certain that if the fifteen or twenty men that were out could be where she was, the night would surely see the end of the monster and all his cattle-killing. Mary tried to think. She knew that if the bear followed the lower ground on to the wooded hillsides and still did not climb up, he would have to turn and move for a considerable distance toward the northwest.

The girl was now on a high hill that was part of a barren ridge stretching far into the northwest. She knew this vicinity, now. She had never before been quite at this point, but remembered seeing the ridge when she and Jim had been riding home one evening, some five miles away. And she remembered that Jim had told her he planned to hunt up in this region on this very day. The other men had said they would go farther toward the north, and then circle back. She believed she saw, then, why they had missed the grizzly. The

wily outlaw must be moving between them. But Jim had said he was going up in this general direction. Of course there was no telling where he was now, but she could ride toward the northwest on this high divide. Mary put her horse to a gallop and rode on for nearly two miles. She came to a small stretch of scattering pines, pulled her horse down and rode through the trees to the open ridge beyond, and again she cantered on for a mile. It came to her that Jim might be near enough to hear her if she called. Accordingly she stopped her horse and shouted at the top of her voice. She waited and listened. There was no reply. Again and again she shouted but the only reply was the echo of her voice from a lonely mountain side.

The wind had died down. Not a thing moved. There was a solemn hush, and a death-like stillness lay on the ridge.

Chapter XXII

HELD IN THE SPLIT PINE

THE north canyon was only a little distance from the point where Mary had stopped on the ridge. Directly ahead of her, not many rods from the canyon, was a lone tree, known by the cowman as the Split-Pine. It was not a big tree and had stood there in the same gnarled, split condition since the earliest cattleman could remember. There were no other trees except little ones near the canyon, and this lone, gnarled specimen stood out by itself on a little barren plain.

Mary rode north along the ridge and finally out on this level near the Split-Pine. She let her horse stand for a little time and then the utter loneliness of the place made her decide to go home. She turned her horse's head southward and was just starting when she heard quick shots from a heavy rifle, far down toward the west of the canyon.

Instantly she supposed the shots were fired by Jim Carnarvon, and she wanted to get to him at once. She shouted his name once, loudly. Her voice went trailing away toward the west but there was no answer. Mary was excited. She hurriedly tied her horse to the Split-Pine tree and ran across the open to a point where the ground fell sharply away into some huge bowlders and stunted pines that reached down a slope, a place she could not ride down. She stopped with her hand on a big bowlder and shouted, "Jim!"

There was no reply. She stood there, uncertain for a minute whether to get back to her horse and ride by a long detour to the place where she had heard the shots, or walk still farther down the slope and call again. It seemed to her she might go farther down the slope with safety but at the same time she was aware she had not brought her rifle. It was in the holster on her saddle. She started down, then stopped, and decided to go back to the horse. How foolish she had been, she said to herself, to forget her rifle! Yet, she mentally

asked, how could anything harm her here? But the stillness—it seemed to get on her nerves. Again she shouted Jim's name and was half annoyed when he did not answer. Was it Jim? If so, had he been shooting at the grizzly? A look of anxiety came over her face. Suppose Jim had wounded the grizzly and was badly wounded himself? She decided she was foolish to imagine such things. Jim was able to take care of himself. And, after all, possibly it was not Jim who had done the shooting, but one of the other men. Mary believed she might as well get back to the horse and go home. She could see pretty well on all sides of her except around a sharp turn in the hill to the right. The ground there, for a stretch, was clear.

Mary had taken two steps backward, resolved on returning to her horse, when she heard a slight sound and—the grizzly came around the bend.

She saw only his head as she turned and ran up the slope. For a moment the huge bowlders hid the girl as she scrambled up and

around them, but the grizzly saw her and rushed for her. Twice he was halted by the giant rocks. He dodged around them and with a roar heaved up to the level and ran for the girl. Breathless with terror, she was nearing the Split-Pine when a fearful thing happened. Her horse, terror stricken at the approaching grizzly, lunged frantically, broke his reins and went racing like mad across the plain toward the south, the rifle swinging in the holster of the saddle.

Mary did the only thing she could. She reached the Split-Pine, seized the lower limbs and went up like a cat. The tree was none too big. She got up as high as she dared where the limbs bore her weight, and the next instant the monster grizzly stood on his hind legs and with growl and roar beat the trunk of the tree, making it shiver like a frail thing in a mighty wind. The beast struck time after time, breaking off the boughs just below her. In his blind rage to kill, he brought all the force of his mighty arms to bear. The tree quivered, but held. Mary clung frantically to

the slender trunk with one hand and a bough with the other. When the grizzly struck, his deadly claws did not miss her by more than two feet. She could see his small dark murderous eyes, and growls and roars rolled out from his throat.

Mary screamed for Jim with all her might. Again, and again, she screamed. The sounds of her voice floated away in the distance, only to return as a mocking echo, but there was no reply.

"Jim! Jim! Help! Help! Help!" she screamed.

And then she believed she must certainly die. The grizzly struck the smaller half of the tree trunk and it broke with a crash, six feet from the ground. Mary jerked her foot back quickly where she had been bracing it against the more slender piece of the pine. The part of the tree she was clinging to now was much larger than the other but it did not seem that it could long withstand many of those shivering blows, and the crazed grizzly now attacked with both teeth and blows.

Twice the pine shivered and once there was a faint cracking sound. Mary was giving one piercing scream after another. The grizzly beat the harder to reach her, for her cries seemed only to increase his rage. There was no sign of Jim, and no sound nor sign of any living thing save the roar of the giant bear and the cries of the girl.

The grizzly struck another mighty blow. There came again the sounds of splintering wood; Mary clung desperately to her place.

"Oh! Jim!" She uttered this in one long, despairing cry. There was no human answer.

Suddenly up from the south, and on top of a little knoll, not fifty yards away, there appeared a tremendous, lean, powerful dog.

For an instant, Mary stared at him. The great dog stood with his ears cocked up, head high and slightly turned to one side as he looked; his right forefoot was slightly uplifted. He seemed to want to be sure, and, in that pulsating second before the girl uttered another sound, he did know—and Mary also knew—knew it was Bugle, her giant puppy,

for she had always considered him that—knew him by his color and size—knew him by the white spot on his chest—knew him because—it was he and no other! Her brain was in a whirl. She knew not where he had so long been—only knew he was there.

She screamed out the words, "Bugle! Bugle! Drive him away! Drive him away!" But before she had finished the words it flashed through her brain that she was calling him to his death. For Bugle was coming in!

Chapter XXIII

JUDGMENT

It happened that at the moment Bugle came up on the rise of ground and saw the monster, the grizzly's back was toward him. With a rumbling snarl, his ears laid back close to his head, Bugle shot in and slashed the grizzly in the hind leg before he could drop to all fours.

The grizzly dropped to meet him but before he could turn, Bugle, with amazing quickness, was in again, furiously slashing the beast's hind quarter. So keen and powerful were the fangs of the giant dog that he ripped the hide, leaving streaks of blood. With a terrible roar the bear rushed for the dog.

In her excitement, Mary had been straining her body around the tree, and her foot suddenly slipped and she fell. She grasped wildly at a dead limb, but it snapped like paper and

she fell backward. She struck in a position that, in itself, might have killed her. As she tumbled down, her left ankle caught in the crevice of the split tree; her leg was wrenched violently as she struck the ground on her shoulders. For a second she was dazed, yet did not quite lose consciousness. She got her hands under her and tried to get up on one foot to free the other, but a horrible weakness went through her; she could not get up. Every instant she expected death.

The grizzly, after charging Bugle and running him a few yards, whirled and started for the tree. Bugle was frantic. He leaped like a cat on the grizzly's hind quarters and ripped and tore so savagely that the bear reared up, whirled, and again with a roar like thunder, charged the dog; but the cunning Bugle dodged among the low trees and scrub north of the tree, and was everywhere except within reach of his gigantic enemy. As the dog leaped and dodged to escape those mighty arms he managed twice to slash the bear with

his fangs. Like a thousand furies the bear rushed for him, roaring incessantly, crashing the smaller trees to the ground and tearing up the rocks and gravel in his mad lunges. In spite of his bulk the grizzly was astonishingly quick in whirling and rushing. It would have taken little of his mighty strength to kill Bugle,—just one swing with one of those mailed paws and he could have wiped out the life of the dog as a storm might crash a tree.

Bugle purposely worked away from the Split-Pine. With the many small trees and bushes to aid him, he dodged about among them like a rabbit,—always running, yet swerving and rushing and slashing the bear in the rear, then with incredible quickness, leaping clear; again turning and whirling, rushing in and chopping with his powerful steel-like fangs, and again and again ripping and slashing the grizzly's hide. Once, in one of his desperate turns, to escape his foe, Bugle bumped against a small tree and barely missed death. He was half dazed and bore off a little from the battle. Unfortunately, this again

brought the conflict in the open and near the trapped and struggling girl; once more the grizzly charged to put an end to her.

At this juncture Jim Carnarvon came struggling up to the level, so near, yet so pitifully far away. Jim's clothes were torn to shreds, his face and hands were bleeding from vines and briers, his gun lay in the bottom of a creek where he had fallen and almost drowned in his mad rush toward the place from which he had heard Mary's screams. As Jim tried to struggle forward a weakness laid hold of him that made him weave in his effort to stand up. His mad run had exhausted him. He tried to move faster toward the girl, whom he could see struggling on the ground. If he could do no more than die with her, he would do that. And, as he came struggling across the little plain in that fearful hour, Jim saw one of the most dramatic battles ever witnessed by a man.

He saw the giant dog leap and strike the grizzly's back like a mountain lion—saw him set his fangs and shake and tear with mighty

motions of his head—heard the bear roaring incessantly, saw him whirl and the dog still hold and tear. The battle was again in the scrub. The grizzly reared to his towering height and lunged sidewise against some scrub. Bugle was knocked off his back and prone to the ground. The grizzly dropped down and was fairly upon him. Bugle leaped to his feet, but too late wholly to escape the swing of one of those deadly arms. The tips of the claws ripped through his muscles and the blood ran from his flank in a stream. Bugle leaped clear, and headed toward the canyon. He was pushed dangerously near the edge but made the turn as the grizzly again struck at him, and now the battle raged a little south among round gray stones protruding up from the level.

Jim Carnarvon tried to shout as he stumbled forward, but he was so weak he could scarcely make a sound. Once he stumbled over a rock and fell to the ground, his muscles quivering. He got to his hands and knees; then on his feet, and came stumbling on. The battle was

now on the rocky knoll between him and Mary. Jim saw the dog plainly now. Three times the grizzly barely caught him with the tips of his claws. Bugle's head and sides were a mass of rips and blood, but he kept boring in, snarling and slashing, leaping clear and always driving in at the rear as when he had begun the attack. At times his snarls changed to low desperate groans but he fought with terrific power.

The blood-red sun swung low to the western horizon. High up on the crags on the other side of the canyon, a mountain goat stood, poised, silent, like a statue of marble, looking down on the scene. A speck far up in the sky overhead floated down, and an eagle hung silent overhead, with outspread wings.

Furiously the battle moved slowly away from the knoll and again they were in the small trees and scrub near the canyon. Never for an instant did Bugle lessen his driving attacks, and when the grizzly lunged for him in the scrub, he swept aside and this time he took the first hold that offered, on the right hip.

The grizzly whirled, half upright on his hind legs. Bugle leaped away, for the grizzly drove with such force that he pushed Bugle back from the opening he tried for in the bushes, and drove straight at him, so that the dog was again driven toward the edge of the canyon, and once more he strove desperately to make the turn and get away from the edge of the cliff. The bear, wild in his rage, bore swiftly down on him.

Bugle barely leaped clear of the deadly swing and rushed with all his might to make the circle away from the dangerous cliff as he had done before. But this rush of the grizzly was not like the others. It was furiously fast. Just at this point there was an open barren covered with fine shale rock. So swiftly did the bear rush in that he was almost upon Bugle as the dog made his desperate turn, sending the gravel flying in his tremendous effort. The grizzly, close behind, swung viciously for him, barely missed, and pulled himself together for a stop,—but too late. For an instant his vast gray bulk loomed against

the fading sky, then pitched over the cliff, and fell toward the rocks a thousand feet below.

The noise of battle ended with startling suddenness. Bugle turned in his flight and looked back just in time to see the bear go over. He ran trembling to the ledge and watched the grim fall, then he went straight to Mary, licked her face and cried as a human might cry, the blood from his slashed face mingling with his tears. Neither Bugle nor Mary had yet noticed Jim Carnarvon, who was still doggedly staggering forward. Now he fell to his knees at Mary's side, and he freed her foot. Then they put their arms around one another, drew the dog close, and, kneeling as they were, they wept—young Jim Carnarvon silently, Mary Norman with great heaving, choking sobs, like a child; she cried not only because she was alive but because she believed Bugle must die. He was lying on the ground, panting for breath, hot slaver dropping from his great jaws.

At this moment there appeared on a ridge well to the east a body of mounted men, run-

ning their horses like mad toward the scene. It was Wade Norman and his men. With his field glasses Wade had seen Mary on the ground, and the beginning of the battle. Horror-struck, he had shouted to his men and they had started. Yelling and shooting they had come on, but they had been pitifully far away. Jim Carnarvon had been conscious of the sounds of the firing as he came up to Mary.

The men rushed in and leaped from their horses. Mary could not speak, and Jim Carnarvon started to speak, but stopped. Every one's eyes were on Bugle. He looked up at them and patted his tail a little on the ground.

Wade Norman was so weak he could scarcely stand. "Oh, Mary," he groaned, "I don't know what I'd have done if I'd lost you this way—Bugle—" Wade's voice broke, and for a moment he held his face close to his horse's sweating neck.

Then turning, he stooped to pat the dog, saying: "Boys, some of you hurry to the house and bring the buckboard. We'll take Bugle home."

It was late and the night was falling when the wagon returned. Mary was lifted in and sat down in the rear of the buckboard. The men lifted Bugle in. At once he lay down with his head in her lap. Wade Norman and Jim Carnarvon sat in the seat and drove while the other men came on at a little distance behind. They rode slowly, with rhythmical squeak in their saddles, now and then speaking in low, subdued tones and again falling silent.

The horses drawing the buckboard moved out on a wide, level valley that stretched far away to the south. Bugle had fallen asleep, and Mary Norman sat with both her hands held lightly upon him. His breathing was deep and peaceful, giving the girl assurance that he would get well.

The horses walked steadily and quietly on. From the eastern hills the moon pushed up into the sky and night closed in on the valley.

THE END